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CRANMER.

WRITINGS

OF THE REV. DR.

THOMAS CRANMER.

Archbishop of Canterbury and Martyr, 1556.

Vol. 8.

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CONTENTS.

Page

Some Account of the Life of Thomas Cranmer.

Part I.—Cranmer during the reign of Henry VIII..... 1
Part II.—Cranmer in the reign of Edward VI..... 40
Part III.—Cranmer in the reign of Queen Mary 56

Cranmer's Recantations 71
A Prologue or Preface to the Bible 73
Annotations on the Erudition of a Christian Man..... 86
Catechismus; that is to say, A short Instruction into the Christian Religion 101
The Preface 103
A short Instruction concerning the Ten Commandments.... 104
The first Sermon—A declaration of the first Commandment. 106
The second part of the first Sermon 112
The second Sermon—On the second (third) Commandment . 121
The third Sermon—On the third (fourth) Commandment... 127
The fourth Sermon—On the fourth (fifth) Commandment .. 132
The fifth Sermon—On the fifth (sixth) Commandment 138
The sixth Sermon—On the sixth (seventh) Commandment.. 144
The seventh Sermon—On the seventh (eighth) Commandment 146
The eighth Sermon—On the eighth (ninth) Commandment . 152
The ninth Sermon—On the ninth (tenth) Commandment... 156
The tenth Sermon—On the tenth Commandment..... 160
A general Preface to be rehearsed in the beginning of every Sermon upon the Articles of our Faith, commonly called "The Creed." 163
The first Sermon on the Creed—Of the Creation..... 165
The second Sermon—Of our Redemption..... 169
The third Sermon—Of our Sanctification 175
A general Preface to be rehearsed in the beginning of every Sermon made on the Lord's Prayer..... 183
The first Sermon—Our Father, which art in heaven..... 185
The second—Thy kingdom come 192
The third—Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven 196
The fourth—Give us this day our daily bread 202

Page

The fifth—And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us 207
The sixth—And suffer us not to be led into temptation 210
The seventh—But deliver us from evil. Amen..... 215

Extracts from "A Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ."

Some Account of Cranmer's books on the Sacrament..... 221
A Preface to the Reader..... 223
The first Book—Of the true and catholic doctrine and use of the Sacrament 226
The second Book—Against the error of Transubstantiation.. 240
The third Book—Teaching the manner how Christ is present in his Supper 240
The fourth Book—Of the eating and drinking of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ..... 245
The fifth Book—Of the oblation and sacrifice of our Saviour Christ 251

CRANMER'S LETTERS AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

The Article of Justification..... 266
Letter to Bucer, inviting him over into England 267
Letter to Calvin..... 268
Against certain slanders falsely raised upon him..... 269
A Writing or Letter to Queen Mary 272
Extract of another Letter to the Queen..... 283
A Letter to a Lawyer, for the drawing out of his Appeal ... 284
A Letter to Mistress Wilkinson 286
A Letter to Sir William Cecil..... 288

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL

SOME ACCOUNT

OF

THE LIFE OF THOMAS CRANMER,

Archbishop of Canterbury, and Martyr, A. D. 1555.

PART I.

Cranmer during the reign of Henry VIII.

A COMPLETE biographical account of Cranmer must include a large portion of the history of the English reformation. In the present sketch it is only intended to state some particulars which are requisite to convey correct information respecting his personal history, briefly noticing several points which have been misrepresented by the bigoted Romanists and the self-called liberal historians of protestant countries. We cannot be surprised that the character of a real follower of Christ is not fairly appreciated by the world, but every opportunity should be taken, to correct those mis-statements which bear some appearance of truth, while grosser falsehoods may be left, as carrying their own refutation. In general, the English protestant is too indifferent respecting the charges advanced against Cranmer. He would not estimate the character of the apostle of the gentiles by the opinions of the craftsmen of Ephesus or the philosophers of Athens, although they were not expressed in the bitter terms used by the elders of Jerusalem, who called him "a pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition"—why then should he listen to the representations of the character of Cranmer which emanate from those who evidently are actuated by a similar spirit to that of the opponents of the apostle. The words of our Lord, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;" are applicable to every follower of Christ.

But, however unqualified the world and its votaries may be to estimate the character of a christian, the accusations against Cranmer render it necessary to show that he may rightly be designated as such. Nor is this difficult. There are numerous

testimonies extant in the writings of his contemporaries, and in the public and private documents of that day, which explain his conduct; the originals still exist, and lately have been published in various forms. To these it is the duty of the English protestant to refer; they are not difficult of access although too frequently neglected.*

Thomas Cranmer was the son of a gentleman of respectability, of Aslacton, in Nottinghamshire, where he was born July 2d, 1489. He received the first rudiments of his education under a harsh preceptor, an ecclesiastic, from whom "he learned little, and had to suffer much." His father permitted him to practise field sports and exercises, in the pursuit of which he manifested much courage and address. After his father's death, he was sent, at the early age of fourteen, to Jesus' college in Cambridge. There he lost his time till he was twenty-two years of age, in the sophistry, logic, and scholastic philosophy of that day. Afterwards he studied Erasmus, and good Latin authors for four or five years, till the writings of Luther began to engage public attention. He then, as Strype relates, "considered what great controversy there was in matters of religion; not in trifles, but in the chiefest articles of our salvation, and bent himself to try out the truth therein. And forasmuch as he perceived he could not rightly judge in such weighty matters without the knowledge of the holy scriptures, before he was influenced with any man's opinions or errors, he applied his whole study for three years therein. After this he gave his mind to good writers both new and old; not rashly running over them; for he was a slow reader, but a diligent marker of whatsoever he read, seldom reading without pen in hand. And whatsoever made either for the one part or the other, of things in controversy, he wrote it out if it were short,

* Copies of most of the papers and documents referred to in this sketch, will be found in the histories of Herbert, Strype, Fox, and Burnet. Some of the strongest testimonies in behalf of Cranmer are in the pages of lord Herbert, who certainly cannot be accused of partiality towards the doctrines of the reformer. The history of the reformation by the Rev. H. Soames, lately published, contains many important statements respecting Cranmer—they are the more valuable as they are particularly calculated to expose the sophistries newly revived by modern Romanists. These works have left little to be desired as to authenticated details respecting the occurrences of the reformation, but an account of those times, written upon the plan of Milner's history of the church of Christ, is greatly needed.

In the following pages the sources are indicated from whence information upon points of importance has been derived. To have given minute references would only have embarrassed the reader without any corresponding advantage.—If fuller particulars be desired relative to any subject connected with the history of the English reformation, the reader may refer to the historians already mentioned, with confidence that he will find in their pages the information he desires. Much valuable information also is contained in the history of England, by Sharon Turner.

or at least noted the author and the place that he might write it out at leisure, which was a great help to him in debating matters ever after."*

This was Cranmer's course of study until 1523, when he took his degree of doctor of divinity, about the thirty-fourth year of his age. He thus accumulated stores of learning which proved of material service to him, for he never was at a loss when Henry VIII. consulted him on subjects of doubt and difficulty; in a few hours he could communicate information upon any of the abstruse or complicated questions in which that monarch frequently employed himself.

Cranmer had previously married the daughter of a gentleman, by which union he lost his fellowship, but he continued to pursue his studies, and was appointed lecturer at Buckingham (afterwards Magdalen) college. His wife resided with a relative who kept the Dolphin inn, whither Cranmer frequently resorted to visit her. Upon this circumstance the papists grounded an assertion that he was originally a hostler, accustomed to frequent low company, and devoid of learning! His wife died in child-birth within a year after their marriage, upon which the master and fellows of Jesus' college unanimously re-chose him a member of their society.

About that time cardinal Wolsey induced some of the most eminent scholars of Cambridge to remove to his new foundation at Oxford. Cranmer was nominated for one, but he declined the offer, although advantageous in point of emolument. Soon after, he was appointed examiner in divinity, "in which place he did much good; for he used to question the candidates out of the scriptures, and by no means would let them pass, if he found they were unskilful therein, or unacquainted with the history of the bible. The friars, whose study lay only in school authors, especially were so; whom therefore he sometimes turned back as insufficient, advising them to study the scriptures for some years longer, before they came for their degrees; it being a shame for a professor in divinity to be unskilled in the book, wherein the knowledge of God and the grounds of divinity lay. Whereby he made himself from the beginning hated by the friars, yet some of the more ingenuous afterwards rendered him great and public thanks for refusing them; whereby, being put upon the study of God's word, they attained to more sound knowledge in religion."

*Strype's Memorials of archbishop Cranmer, contain the best account of that prelate; they were compiled, as he states, "by a careful and long search, not only into printed books of history, but the best archives, and many most precious and inestimable manuscripts that have fallen into my hands." These are enumerated by Strype in his preface, and are referred to in the course of his work. Most of the personal particulars were drawn from a manuscript account, compiled by Morice, the secretary of Cranmer, for the use of archbishop Parker, which still remains in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

These particulars of Cranmer's early life throw considerable light upon his character. We see him early trained to habits of submission and self-control, sufficiently instructed in the subtilties of scholastic divinity to discern its utter worthlessness, while the writings of Erasmus removed blind reverence for papal authority, and those of Luther pointed out the doctrines of the gospel. His scriptural studies made him wise unto salvation, and showed him the necessity of trying the opinions of men by the standard of divine truth, while his acquaintance with the early fathers enabled him to meet, and to overcome the papists with their own weapons. Nor can one who pursued this even course of life for twenty-five years, declining advantageous offers of preferment, be considered as a worldly-minded or ambitious character. His marriage also showed him to be very different from the ecclesiastics of that period. The worst that the Romanists have alleged against Cranmer on this head is, that he preferred a married to a single life—of the lives of Gardiner, Bonner, and other "unchaste votaries" of the Romish church, who were his contemporaries, it is unnecessary to speak.

Such was Cranmer at the age of thirty-nine, when he was called to enter upon more public duties. Here we must briefly relate some particulars respecting the divorce of Henry VIII., which materially assisted the progress of the reformation in this country, as it was the main cause of the pope's authority being cast off.

In 1501, Henry VII. married his eldest son, prince Arthur, then a youth of sixteen, to Catherine, princess of Spain. The prince died a few months after his marriage. The king, being unwilling to return the large dowry of the princess, determined to affiance her to his younger son, prince Henry, then a child of twelve years of age. As this marriage with a brother's widow was contrary to the Levitical law, and the practice of christian nations, the papal sanction was considered needful. It was applied for against the earnest remonstrance of archbishop Warham, but pope Julius II. readily consented to oblige the two powerful monarchs of Spain and England; a bull was granted by which the prince and princess were absolved from ecclesiastical censures if they should marry, provided they submitted to some penance which might be enjoined by their confessors; thus the pope admitted that such a union was contrary to the scriptures, and assumed a power to dispense with the laws of God. The age of Henry, however, prevented the immediate completion of this contract, and his father, upon more mature reflection, began to apprehend that many disadvantages might arise from such a connexion. He therefore caused his son, two years afterwards, to make a regular protest against the marriage, and when on his death-bed, he strongly urged the prince not to complete his union with Catherine.

Other counsels prevailed, and Henry's own inclination coinciding, he married the Spanish princess, a few weeks after he came to the throne.

For a time Henry lived happily with Catherine, but all their children died young, excepting the princess Mary. As the queen advanced in life she fell into an ill state of health, and an heir to the throne was no longer to be expected. This was a severe disappointment to the king. His education had led him to the study of casuistical divinity, and he was struck with the similarity of his own case to the denunciation of holy writ, (Levit. xx. 21,) that such marriages should be childless. Further examination of the writings of the school divines increased his uneasiness. He found that his favourite author, Thomas Aquinas, very strongly censured such marriages, and also held that the popes had no power to dispense with the laws of God. It does not appear precisely when Henry first began to entertain scruples upon this subject, but there is evidence to show that so early as 1524, these doubts had begun to influence his conduct, and he no longer considered Catherine to be his lawful wife. The difficulties in which he was placed also became more apparent in the following year, when the emperor Charles had engaged to marry the princess Mary, but the treaty was broken off upon the council of Castile expressing doubts as to her legitimacy; many learned men hesitating as to the authority of the pope to sanction such a union. Negotiations respecting the marriage of the princess into the royal family of France, also failed from the same cause.

At this period cardinal Wolsey was the prime minister of England, and possessed extraordinary influence over the mind of Henry. The emperor Charles, who was nephew to Catherine, had sorely displeased the cardinal, by disappointing his repeated attempts to obtain the papacy, after having promised to aid his wishes therein. Wolsey, anxious to revenge himself upon the emperor, and also offended with Catherine for having rebuked his luxurious and licentious course of life, determined to rid himself of a virtuous monitor, and to mortify the pride of the imperial family, by promoting a divorce from the Spanish princess, and a marriage with Renée, sister to the French queen. With this view Wolsey directed Longland, bishop of Lincoln, who was the king's confessor, to strengthen Henry's scruples. Longland denied that he had first infused them, but it was generally believed that they had been encouraged by him, and the whole subject began to engage the public attention.*

While Henry's mind was thus exercised, his desire to put an

* Wolsey avowed himself to have been the originator of the king's scruples. *Sharon Turner*, ii. 146. By his legantine power he published a papal bull against unlawful marriages in 1524.

end to his marriage received an increased impulse from another circumstance; the appearance at court of Anne Boleyn, daughter of sir Thomas Boleyn, viscount Rochfort, a nobleman of considerable wealth and influence, who was connected with some of the principal families of the land. He had been much employed in affairs of state. His daughter was taken to France by the sister of the king, on her marriage with the French monarch, in 1514. Anne was then seven years of age; she remained in that country, as an attendant upon queen Claudia and the duchess of Alençon, who was a favourer of the reformation. On Anne's return she appeared at the English court in the spring of 1527. Being in the prime of youth, exceedingly beautiful, and far more accomplished than the ladies of that period generally were, she attracted much attention. The eldest son of the earl of Northumberland in particular, declared himself anxious to obtain her for his wife; the offer of such a union speaks highly in her favour. But the king had also become her admirer, though he was not disposed at that time to avow his own sentiments; her marriage with lord Percy was forbidden, and she was withdrawn from court for a time, which she attributed to the displeasure of the cardinal. Previously, however, to the intentions of Henry towards Anne Boleyn being declared, he had taken decided steps to procure a divorce.

A recent instance of facility in a similar case, that of Lewis XII., made it probable that no difficulty would be offered on the part of the pope; especially as it could be proved that the bull of dispensation for the marriage was obtained under false pretences; a circumstance always considered sufficient to justify the revocation of a papal decree, without compromising the infallibility of the papacy. As a preliminary step, the bishops were directed to give their opinions upon the subject; they did so; with the single exception of Fisher, bishop of Rochester, all declared against the validity of the king's marriage, and Dr. Knight, one of the king's secretaries, was despatched to Rome to conduct the negotiations.

This was in 1527; at that period the pope was completely in the emperor's power. Rome had been taken and sacked by the imperial troops; the pope was then a prisoner, fearful that the emperor would accuse him of simony, and cause him to be deposed, to which he was also liable from having forged documents to conceal the illegitimacy of his own birth!

With much difficulty, Knight contrived to communicate with the pope, who professed his willingness to forward the views of the English monarch, but stated that the emperor had forbidden him to do so. After seven months' imprisonment, the pope effected an arrangement with the emperor, and succeeded in escaping to Orvieto. Dr. Knight followed him thither, and was received by Clement with many professions of a desire to oblige Henry, but he resorted to numerous expedients to

avoid giving a decision upon the subject. Among other suggestions, he proposed to sir Gregory Cassalis, an agent of Henry, that if his master's conscience were satisfied, he should immediately marry another wife, and then refer the whole case absolutely to him for decision. The English monarch, of course, would not take this step, which must have thrown him wholly into the power of the pope; to say nothing of other objections.

The various artifices and expedients practised by Clement need not to be detailed here; they are related by the best historians of those times, who refer to the original papers which passed during these negotiations, in which Gardiner, afterwards bishop of Winchester, was most active, as one of the king's agents, in forwarding the divorce. At length, in 1528, the pope consented to grant a commission to two cardinals, Wolsey and Campegio, to examine and try the cause in England.

The pope, however, protracted the affair as much as possible; his main object was to gain time, for any change of circumstances would tend to relieve him from his dilemma; and it was not until the 31st of May, 1529, that the legates opened their court. Even then the proceedings went on slowly. Campegio, as the servile instrument of the pope, sought to delay any decision. Wolsey dared not openly to oppose his master's will, or hinder a measure from going forward which he had himself so earnestly promoted; yet having by this time ascertained where the king's choice would be placed, he was anxious to prevent a union which in all probability would cause his own downfal. His secret correspondence with the pope was detected by the English ambassador at Rome, and communicated to Henry, who, as may be supposed, was much exasperated at Wolsey's treachery. The king was also displeased with Campegio, who had shown him a decretal bull annulling the marriage, already signed by the pope, but refused to part with it from his possession, or to let any one else see it. While the proceedings of the legantine court went slowly forward, the pope succeeded in arranging his disputes with the emperor on favourable terms, and agreed to the emperor's desire that no divorce should take place. Further pretexts for delay now were requisite; in July, when nothing remained but for the legates to pronounce their decision, Campegio unexpectedly adjourned the court until the month of October, alleging that the vacation in the courts of law at Rome had commenced; and on the 4th of August an injunction was received, forbidding any further proceedings, as the pope would himself decide the cause at Rome, where the king and queen were cited to appear.

This conduct might have been endured in a less enlightened age, but the authority of the pope had been publicly questioned, and Henry possessed a spirit not inclined to submit to such domination. He expressly declared that he would not degrade himself or his kingdom, by yielding obedience to such a

mandate. Campegio shortly after returned to Italy, and Wolsey soon became sensible that his disgrace was at hand. The baggage of the Italian cardinal was searched at Calais, in the hope of obtaining possession of the pope's bull annulling the marriage, but it had been committed to the flames.

The foundation of the papal power in England evidently was shaken, and many ecclesiastics who were still attached to the doctrines of the Romish church, united in resenting the conduct of the pontiff. From the foregoing particulars it will appear that the selfish, unprincipled conduct of Clement, gave the main impulse to the renunciation of papal authority in England; and the first decided shock to that power in this country, was a consequence of the claim to dispense with the divine ordinances which had been assumed by the popes. Cranmer, Anne Boleyn, and others, who were attached to the reformed doctrine, were instruments in diffusing the light of the gospel and assisting in the progress of the reformation, but the fabric of Romish domination was undermined by its own artificers.

The embarrassment of the pope at this time was extreme; he would gladly have availed himself of any expedient which could have been listened to both by the emperor and the English monarch. The object of the former was that his aunt should not be degraded from her rank; he would have agreed to allow Henry to contract a second marriage upon the plan sometimes adopted in Germany, of allowing a second and inferior wife. Clement was willing to sanction this, and Cassalis, the English agent, in a letter dated Rome, September 18, 1530, says, "Some days ago the pope, in private, offered to me this proposal—as a thing of which he made much account; that your majesty might have a dispensation to have TWO wives." But Henry's uneasiness proceeded from scruples against the pope's sanction to an illegal proceeding, and was not likely to be silenced by a mere repetition of the same medicine.

We now resume the account of Cranmer.—In the summer of 1529, the plague raged at Cambridge, and most of the members of the university retired to other places. Cranmer was at Waltham Abbey, residing in the family of a Mr. Cressy, whose sons were under his care. The king had made a short progress into the country, to divert his thoughts under the uneasiness he then suffered. Having dismissed the cardinals, he returned towards London. On his journey he stayed a night at Waltham; the royal suite were as usual lodged in the houses of the neighbouring gentry. Dr. Stephens, (Gardiner,) the king's secretary, and Dr. Fox the royal almoner, were entertained at Mr. Cressy's. Stephens and Fox were among the most active agents in forwarding the divorce; they rejoiced at thus unexpectedly meeting with Cranmer, whom they knew to be eminently skilled in the civil and canon law, and in the writings of ancient divines. The conversation, of course,

turned upon the subject then so much discussed, and they requested him to state his opinion. Cranmer told them that he had not considered the question so fully as they had done, but that without any reference to the self-constituted authorities of the popes and their courts, he thought it a matter of conscience, whether the marriage were contrary to the word of God or not. Of this he considered divines to be the best judges, and their opinions upon the subject could be ascertained without much delay or expense, while their reasonings would communicate information whereby the king's mind probably would be relieved.

Fox and his companion were pleased with the suggestion; they took an early opportunity to communicate it to the king—the crafty Gardiner would have given it as their own idea, but Fox honestly stated that Dr. Cranmer was the author. Henry immediately expressed his satisfaction, and directed that a messenger should be sent for Cranmer. He had then proceeded to Cambridge, and unwillingly returned towards London. On his arrival he complained to Gardiner and Fox, that they had mentioned his name, urging them to get him excused from appearing personally before the king. They tried to do so, but Henry required Cranmer to attend, and commanded him, as his subject, to endeavour to forward the plan he had suggested, according to law, and with impartiality. Henry also stated solemnly, that he had long been troubled in conscience respecting his marriage with Catherine, declaring that if he could consider it a lawful connexion, he would not seek to be released. There is indeed good ground for believing that his scruples were real, and not mere pretences as the Romanists have asserted. Cranmer, still desirous to avoid personally engaging in this affair, then recommended the king to direct some of the ablest divines to examine the question. Henry assented, but required Cranmer to write upon the subject, and calling sir Thomas Boleyn, the earl of Wiltshire, committed Cranmer to the care of that nobleman, directing that he should have any books he might require, and a quiet opportunity to enter on his researches. Thus we see that the king first introduced Cranmer to the Boleyn's, whereas the Romanists have represented him as a creature of that family, introduced by them to Henry, to promote ambitious views of their own.

Cranmer took his stand upon scripture ground, and founded his conclusions on the principle that the bishop of Rome had no authority to dispense with the word of God. This principle evidently went much farther than the mere question of the king's marriage; its adoption must lead to a general reformation of the church, both as to doctrine and practice. We may observe that it did so both in England and in Germany, although different circumstances in each country led to that desirable result. Whether the opposition rose from the sale of pardons, or the sanctioning

of an incestuous marriage, the papal authority, in reality, was the point in question ; that being controverted, the word of God was again referred to as the supreme authority. This principle suggested to Cranmer the plan he recommended the king to pursue.

Cranmer having declared his readiness to proceed to the continent, and to defend his opinions even at Rome, was directed to proceed thither, as one of an embassy, with the earl of Wiltshire.

The opinions of several of the Italian universities in favour of the divorce, were obtained, but at Rome no permission for public discussion upon the subject was given. Cranmer resided for some time at Rome and in Italy ; he there witnessed many things which satisfied him as to the real character of the popedom. His mind, like that of Luther, was prepared by his study of the scriptures to be deeply impressed with the antichristian spirit of the pontiff and his court, and their decided opposition to the precepts of that book which the pope claimed an exclusive power to interpret. Clement, desirous to conciliate Cranmer, conferred upon him the title of grand penitentiary of England, which appears to have been merely a nominal office ; his acceptance of it only shows that he did not then seek a quarrel with the see of Rome. Cranmer next proceeded to Germany, where he conferred with Agrippa, one of the principal persons of the imperial court, whom he convinced by the arguments he brought forward. No one was found willing to pursue the discussion, especially as the emperor was so displeased by the conduct of Agrippa, as to withdraw his favour and place him in confinement.

Cranmer then visited other parts of Germany to ascertain the opinions of the protestants, and to offer assistance from the English monarch to the princes, who had lately been compelled by the emperor's conduct, to form the league of Smalcald in their own defence. It is remarkable that the protestant universities were less inclined to favour the divorce than the Romanists, which shows that the opinions collected by the king's agents were obtained in a fairer manner than papists have asserted.*

We find Cranmer in 1532 at Nuremberg, where Osiander was the chief protestant minister. That reformer had given considerable attention to questions of a similar nature, and was inclined to promote the divorce. His interviews with Cranmer however had a more important result ; his advice and exhortations tended much to advance his visitor in spiritual knowledge, and to show him the necessity of a thorough reformation in

* The emperor gave considerable benefices to some who wrote against the divorce, while the accounts of Henry's agent show that no more than a few crowns, which may be considered as official fees, were paid by him to any one.

the church. While at Nuremberg, Cranmer married the niece of Osiander, and thus again gave practical evidence of his renouncing that authority which has forbidden ecclesiastics to marry. The friendly intercourse between Cranmer and the German protestants, was an important means of forwarding the English reformation. But his connexion with the Lutherans tended to fix upon his mind more firmly the idea of the corporeal presence in the sacrament, although he did not adopt their views. He, for some years, continued to believe the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation.

During Cranmer's absence from England, Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, had died. That prelate was deeply attached to the erroneous doctrines of the Romish faith, except with regard to the papal supremacy, against which he bore open testimony, while he cruelly persecuted the Lollards and other faithful followers of Christ. Henry was aware of the critical situation of his affairs, and determined to appoint a successor to Warham, who, *upon principle*, would oppose the Romish usurpations. He therefore passed by Gardiner and the servile ecclesiastics who then were among the loudest in advocating his measures, and chose Cranmer to fill the vacant see. For this purpose he was summoned home, but, having an intimation of the king's design, he delayed his journey on purpose to avoid the appointment, as we shall find he declared when before the Romish commissioners in the reign of queen Mary.

It was in fact six months before Cranmer was consecrated; a delay unusual in the appointment of archbishops, which certainly does not indicate an ambitious or grasping spirit in Cranmer. When his reluctance in other respects had been overcome, Cranmer stated to the king that he neither could nor would receive the archbishopric from the pope, whom he considered to have no authority within the realm. The king then directed several civilians of eminence to state their opinions. They laid before him a mass of evidence, confirming the views of Cranmer, and advised that he should be appointed to the office by the king, suggesting, that, previously to his consecration, he should solemnly declare his determination not to act in any manner inconsistent with a minister of Christ, or a subject of England.

The pope was not pleased to hear of Cranmer's promotion, but he felt that it was not safe to irritate the English monarch by opposition to his will in this instance, and the usual bulls were forwarded from Rome. On the 30th of March, 1533, Cranmer appeared in the chapter-house of Westminster, and there openly, publicly, and expressly, made a protestation, as a precaution that his oath should not be misinterpreted. This protest was witnessed by five civilians and ecclesiastics of eminence; it is printed by Strype. Upon Cranmer's conduct in this affair the Romanists have dwelt with much asperity, but if

the reader will examine the oath which he took, they will find that the decided declarations of fealty to the pope usually inserted in episcopal oaths were *not* contained therein—the strongest expression being, that he would aid and defend the papacy so far as might be consistent with his duty as a christian minister. In fact, there was nothing in Cranmer's subsequent conduct inconsistent with his oath of consecration; nor was his protest needful, excepting that perhaps the prejudices of the times might have induced many to continue to suppose that the English church was necessarily dependent upon the church of Rome, had not the new primate thus openly declared the manner in which alone he would be considered as standing in any relation with the pontiff. The oath and the protest are quite consistent with each other, and requisite in connexion with his subsequent oath for the temporalities; while the transaction is a proof of his candour and integrity, instead of being open to the imputations of the Romanists. Agreeing with this, we have his solemn declaration when about to suffer at the stake—that he had *never* dissembled until he signed the formula of recantation.*

The convocation was then engaged in debate upon the subject of the king's marriage, and shortly after declared that a papal dispensation could not be accounted of sufficient power to set aside the divine law—this was a powerful blow at the claims of the papacy.

The full manner in which the question had been examined during the preceding years, satisfied the minds both of Henry and his subjects in general, that the papal assumption of power to dispense with the law of God, was utterly unfounded; therefore his marriage with Catherine was wholly void. Henry now determined to proceed with decision. He married Anne Boleyn in the latter end of January, 1533. Dr. Lee, bishop of Litchfield and Coventry officiated—the ceremony took place privately in the palace at Whitehall, and Cranmer's own declaration is extant, that he did not know of the union till a fortnight afterwards.†

The purity of the previous conduct of the new queen was soon evidenced, and it became important for the nation as well as for Henry, that his protracted suit for a divorce should be concluded.‡ Cranmer applied to the king upon the subject, as

* It may be remarked, that if Cranmer acted inconsistently with his oath, Warham did so to an infinitely greater extent, yet his conduct is passed over by the Romish historians without censure, though in this respect more liable thereto.

† In a letter to Hawkins, ambassador at the emperor's court. (See Ellis's Letters illustrative of English history, vol. ii.) Cranmer adds, what is very applicable to modern as well as ancient accounts of him, "And many other things be also reported of me, which be mere lies and tales."

‡ Some letters of Henry to Anne Boleyn, written while the treaty

appears from a letter written by him, still in the state paper office. The whole proceedings were conducted with regularity, the evidence was fully examined, and on the 23d of May the king's marriage with Catherine was pronounced null and void. Let it not be forgotten that Gardiner was an active agent in this affair, and that both Bonner and Gardiner wrote most strongly advocating that measure. Their subsequent behaviour fully proved that they acted as courtiers, while Cranmer desired to oppose the usurpations of the papacy.

The pope was exasperated at this proceeding in contempt of his authority; he declared the divorce to be null and void, and threatened Cranmer with excommunication, upon which the new primate prepared an appeal to a general council. At this time he visited his diocese, where he was active in detecting the imposture of Elizabeth Barton, the nun of Kent, who at the instigation of the papists pretended to have communications with Mary Magdalene and angels, and to receive divine revelations. It was a clumsy attempt to check the progress of the reformation.

The differences between Henry and the pope had now proceeded to such an extent, that without absolute submission an open rupture appeared inevitable—an opportunity for conciliation, however, was presented. The pope said, that if Henry would send a proxy to his court, and thus acknowledge his authority, he would give sentence in favour of the divorce. The bishop of Paris was despatched to England by the king of France with this intelligence, upon which it was resolved that the negotiations with Rome should be renewed, but that the opposition to the papal authority should not be relinquished until a favourable result was certain. The bishop proceeded to Rome, where he impressed upon the minds of the pope and cardinals that England might still be kept within the pale of the church. It was agreed to allow some delay, but if, by a certain day, Henry should not signify his consent to a plan devised for settling the affair, the pope would consider his offer as rejected, and resort to extreme proceedings. Henry accepted the offer; an answer was despatched to Rome, stating his readiness again to submit his cause to the pope, but it was winter, and the stipulated time expired before the messenger could arrive. The bishop of Paris represented the weather as the probable cause of the delay, and urged for a respite of six days, but in vain. The measures against Henry were not only resumed, but hurried forward. At the instigation of the cardinals of the

for the divorce was in progress, are preserved in the Vatican. They were purloined from her cabinet by the papal agents, doubtless in the hope that they would furnish evidence of improper conduct. But they contain strong proofs of the correctness of her life, and convey a favourable impression of both parties. They are printed in the Harleian Miscellany, and in Turner's history of Henry VIII.

imperial faction, proceedings which usually occupied three days, were despatched in one. The king's marriage with Catherine was declared to be valid, and he was required under pain of ecclesiastical censures to receive her again as his wife. On the following day the messenger arrived, but it was now too late! Clement refused to reconsider his decision. An English ambassador was proceeding to Rome to complete the negotiations, but on learning what had occurred, he returned home. It is impossible to read these particulars, without observing on what a slender thread human events depend, and that the breach with Rome, which so materially forwarded the English reformation, was effected by one of those remarkable interpositions of divine providence which the christian reader will frequently notice in history.

The parliament assembled at the commencement of 1533, when decisive measures were taken for emancipating the nation from the Romish yoke. The pope's supremacy was openly called in question; the earliest result was the taking away some of the most oppressive and secret proceedings in cases of heresy, and allowing the accused a trial in open court. The payment of certain taxes to the pope was discontinued, and by various other measures the papal power was entirely set aside in England. Thus the nation was delivered from Romish bondage by a prince who certainly did not show himself opposed to the doctrinal errors of popery; who, as Thuanus has observed, would in all probability have continued a willing subject of the papacy, had a more just and prudent pontiff borne the sway. In these parliamentary debates the chief burden laid upon Cranmer. The collections from the fathers which he had made in former years now were most useful; as Strype expresses it, "He proved so evidently and stoutly, both by the word of God, and consent of the primitive church, that this usurped power of the pope is a mere tyranny, and directly against the law of God, that the issue was the abolishing of that foreign papal power, and the expulsion of it out of this realm, by the full consent of parliament."

Other good effects of this renunciation of the papal authority were soon perceived. Cranmer now felt himself at liberty to have the scriptures translated into the English language, and he procured a resolution of the convocation in December 1534, applying to the king to decree that such a work should be undertaken.

An oath assenting to the succession of the crown devolving upon the royal children by the present marriage, was now imposed by authority of parliament. Some expressions used therein implied a renunciation of the papal authority, to which sir Thomas More, bishop Fisher, and other Romanists refused their assent, though they consented to the alteration in the succession. Cranmer wrote to Cromwell, recommending that

these eminent persons might be allowed to take the oath in the form they were willing to admit, but his advice was not followed, and they were beheaded as traitors. Throughout England, only five individuals persisted in refusing to renounce the pope's authority.

In the same year we find Cranmer preaching at Canterbury; his sermons were not confined to disproving the supremacy of the pope, he showed that "our sins are remitted only by the death of our Saviour Christ." One of the regulations now directed to be followed was, that "the true, mere, and sincere word of God should be preached in the churches." The lying Romish legends with which it had been customary to amuse the people, need not here be noticed.

Cranmer also visited some of the dioceses of the most violent of the Romish bishops, who strenuously opposed his proceedings; they sent several bigoted divines, Hubberdin andl others, to visit different parts of the kingdom, to counteract as much as possible the labours of Latimer and other gospe preachers employed by the influence of Cranmer and his supporters, who also took especial care that able ministers should be selected to preach at Paul's cross.

In 1534, Cranmer delivered his testimony in the house of lords respecting general councils, then a subject much agitated. Strype relates, that "He much doubted in himself respecting general councils, and thought that only the word of God was the rule of faith which ought to take place in all controversies of religion. The scriptures were called canonical, as being the only rule of the faith of christians; and these, by the appointments of ancient councils, alone were to be read in the churches. The holy fathers Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, in many things differed from one another, but they always appealed to the scriptures as the common and certain standard. He also cited some remarkable passages out of Augustine, to show what difference he put between the scriptures and all other writings, even of the best and holiest fathers."

This principle of appeal to the scriptures as the only authority by which matters of faith and religion are to be ascertained, was most important. It was early adopted by Cranmer and his associates, and formed, as we have seen, the ground for renouncing the papal authority, and for the subsequent measures of reformation. The errors which still remained were not supported by the authority of the church or tradition, but rather by passages of scripture, misunderstood and improperly applied. This was the case even with regard to the errors respecting the sacrament, and it has been well remarked, that "however tyranny, bigotry, ignorance, or the fear of sedition might hinder or arrest its progress, yet religious knowledge must increase, and error yield to the truth of God's holy word, in proportion as the scriptures become more known and understood."

Cranmer now urged forward the translation of the bible. Tindal's translations being considered objectionable, he caused an old English version of the testament to be divided into portions, sending one to each of the most learned amongst the bishops, for them to revise. The Acts were sent to Stokesley, bishop of London, who refused to take any part in a measure which he said would bring simple people into error. Cranmer expressing his surprise at Stokesley's frowardness, a bystander said he could explain the reason. "It is a portion of the new testament, and my lord of London being persuaded that Christ hath bequeathed him nothing in his testament, thought it mere madness to bestow labour and pain where no gain was to be gotten. And besides this, it is the Acts of the apostles; which were simple, poor fellows, and therefore, my lord of London disdaineth to have to do with any of them!" Cranmer at that time was unable to carry his design into execution in the manner he had intended, but he encouraged others, and Coverdale's bible appeared in 1535.

The progress thus made in opposition to the papacy, with a desire to set a good example, induced Cranmer to send for his wife from Germany. As yet, however, he did not consider it expedient to bring her forward to public notice, nor did he allow his domestic engagements to interfere with his public duties. Fox thus describes Cranmer's manner of life after his advancement to the primacy, during this and the following reign.

To avoid giving cause that the word of God should be slandered and evil spoken of, "this worthy man evermore gave himself to continual study, not breaking that order which he in the university commonly used—that is, by five o'clock in the morning at his book, and so consuming the time in study and prayer until nine. If the prince's affairs did not call him away, he then applied himself until dinner-time to hear suitors, and to despatch such matters as appertained to his especial cure and charge, committing his temporal affairs, both of his household and other foreign business, unto his officers. So that such things never were impediments either to his study, or to his pastoral charge, which principally consisted in reformation of corrupt religion, and in setting forth of true and sincere doctrine. For the most part always being in commission, he associated himself with learned men for searching out one matter or another, for the commodity and profit of the church of England. By means whereof, and his private study, he was never idle; besides that, he accounted it no idle point to bestow one hour or twain of the day in reading over such works and books as daily came from beyond the seas.

"After dinner, if any suitors were in attendance, he would very diligently hear them, and despatch them in such sort as every man commended his lenity and gentleness, although the case required that sometimes divers of them were committed

by him to prison. And if he had no suitors after dinner, for an hour or thereabout, he would play at the chess, or behold such as could play. That done, then again to his ordinary study, at which commonly, he for the most part stood, and seldom sat; and there continuing until five of the clock, bestowed that hour in hearing the common prayer, and walking or using some honest pastime until supper-time. At supper, if he had no appetite, as many times he would not sup, yet would he sit down at the table, having his ordinary provision of his mess furnished with expedient company, he wearing on his hands his gloves, because he would, as it were, thereby wean himself from eating of meat, but yet keeping the company with such fruitful talk as did repast and much delight the hearers; so that by this means hospitality was well furnished, and the alms chest well maintained for the relief of the poor. After supper he would consume one hour at the least, in walking, or some other honest pastime, and then again until nine of the clock, at one kind of study or other. So that no hour of the day was spent in vain, but the same was so bestowed, as tended to the glory of God, the service of the prince, or the commodity of the church; which his well bestowing of his time, procured to him most happily a good report of all men, to be in respect of other men's conversation faultless, as it became the minister of God."

The following account of Cranmer's preaching in the reign of Henry VIII. is given by an eminent contemporary, sir Richard Morison, "He used to preach often, and was a minister of the heavenly doctrine. The subjects of his sermons for the most part were, from whence salvation was to be fetched, and on whom the confidence of man ought to lean. He insisted much upon the doctrines of faith and works, and taught what the fruits of faith were, and what place was to be given to works. He instructed men in the duties they owed their neighbours, and that every one was our neighbour whom we might profit. He declared what it was fit men should think of themselves when they had done all; and lastly, what promises Christ had made, and who they were to whom he would make them good. And these his holy doctrines he strengthened with plenty of quotations out of the holy scriptures, not out of the schoolmen's decrees or later councils; and he recommended them with great integrity of life. Thus he brought in the true preaching of the gospel, altogether different from the ordinary way of preaching in those days; which was to treat concerning the saints, and to tell legendary tales of them, and to report miracles wrought for the confirmation of transubstantiation, and other popish corruptions. And such a heat and conviction accompanied the archbishop's sermons, that the people departed from them with minds possessed with a great hatred of vice, and burning with a desire of virtue."

Cranmer and his friends were at this period opposed by the Romanists, headed by the duke of Norfolk and bishop Gardiner. The struggles of these contending parties, and their alternate success agitated the kingdom during the remainder of Henry's reign;—had Cranmer been a wavering, uncertain character, it is evident that he could not, humanly speaking, have maintained his ground. Some letters preserved among the Cotton manuscripts in the British Museum, show how the royal councillors were then divided, and upon the watch against each other. The intrigues of the different parties were exceedingly complicated, and it is impossible for us at this distant period clearly to understand how some persons whose sentiments were similar, at times personally opposed each other, while a degree of harmony existed between others whose general enmity is most evident. Much of this, perhaps, may be attributed to the authority exercised by Henry, who threw off the political power of the papacy, but retained its doctrinal errors.

At the commencement of 1535, Henry again evinced a desire to be reconciled to the see of Rome, but the imperious temper of Paul III., then the reigning pope, rendered the negotiation abortive. Cranmer ably vindicated the independence of general councils, and urged the necessity of suppressing the corruptions of the popedom; "a thundering bull," as it is denominated by father Paul, was fulminated, not only against the king, but against the whole nation of England, placing the kingdom under an interdict, and ordering similar proceedings to those which had compelled king John to place his crown at the legate's feet. But those days were passed; and few modern Romanists would justify the pope's command to the people of England to rebel against their sovereign—in this and other respects, they have tacitly relinquished the infallibility of the Roman see.

These denunciations of the pontiff, and the attachment to the papal authority manifested by many, both of the clergy and laity, rendered stronger measures requisite for the national security. The dissolution of the monasteries was thereby hastened. The attachment of the monastic orders to the see of Rome, has always been very great—they ever have been "the soldiery of the pope;" their power and numbers rendered them important opponents to the progress of the reformation in England, especially from their ready access to persons of every rank, and the influence they exercised more or less in every family. It was manifest that while they existed, the papal authority never could be wholly destroyed. Their suppression therefore became a subject for the consideration of the council; Cromwell was appointed to act as vicegerent, and a visitation of all the monastic establishments throughout the land was ordered. This was speedily carried into effect, when the veil of pretended holiness which had thinly concealed the

vices of these establishments was removed. It was incontestably proved, that far the greater part of the monasteries were seats of the grossest debaucheries and most horrid vices; that deceptions and frauds abounded within their walls; that discord, violence, and oppression were the least flagrant of their crimes.

The voice of the nation called for the termination of these enormities, while the wealth of the establishments rendered the king and the courtiers more eager for their destruction. The smaller monasteries were suppressed without delay. Cranmer saw that such a measure was absolutely necessary, both from the abominations that prevailed within their walls, and the support they afforded to the papal usurpations; he endeavoured, however, to have their revenues applied to laudable and useful purposes, but in this he could only partially succeed. While noticing the subject, it should not be forgotten that cardinal Wolsey had set a recent example for such spoliation. Pope Clement authorized him, in 1525, to suppress forty monastic establishments, to endow his colleges at Oxford and Ipswich; in other cases similar permission had also been given. Thus the pope gave an example which proved most destructive to his interests in England. Here again we see the hand of God causing the selfish purposes of man to promote his glory. The state of Spain and Italy at this day, show us what, in all human probability, would now have been the situation of our land, had those strong holds of vice and superstition been suffered to remain. If some choice specimens of the arts were destroyed, surely no one who feels the importance of true religion can for a moment weigh them in the balance against the advantages of these measures. The school divinity which had so long been a powerful means of darkening the minds of men, was at the same time suppressed in the universities, and the quadrangles were strewed with the leaves of Duns and other scholastic divines, whose pages were now condemned to the fate they so justly deserved.

In 1535 was published a new edition of the Primer* in English, to which Cranmer seems to have rendered considerable assistance. This work was designed to enable the common people to understand their prayers and the principal parts of the public worship, and to do away many of the superstitions by which they were deceived. It contained about thirty distinct tracts, the contents of which for the most part gave much displeasure to the papists, and several of them were prohibited as soon as they succeeded in displacing Cromwell. The worship of the virgin, or putting "sure trust and hope in her," was especially shown to be contrary to the word of God. In "A devout and fruitful remembrance of Christ's passion," the error of the common ideas respecting the mass were pointed out. In a

* The primer was a selection of prayers and devotional pieces.

dialogue on the ten commandments, the second is plainly distinguished from the first—this tract was afterwards prohibited. A preface to the translation of the Dirige, or office said for the souls of the departed, explains the true intent of the service. The compiler states, that among other works of darkness and deep ignorance, wherein they had blindly wandered, following a sort of blind guides, many days and years, he accounts "the mumbling and pewling forth" of certain psalms and lessons for the souls of the deceased, to be one, and declares that the repeating of them is of no use or efficacy for those that are departed. Strype says, "This book did excellent service, no question, in this ignorant age, and was one among the many good services the lord Cromwell did for religion."

In January, 1536, queen Catherine died, when a reconciliation between Henry and the emperor took place. The former, however, no longer desired to be reconciled to the see of Rome, but entered into further negotiations with the German protestants. But the hopes of those who were most anxious for the progress of the reformation, were checked by the fate of Anne Boleyn. She appears to have partly lost the king's affections, when he found himself disappointed of a son, and an unguarded buoyancy of spirits excited his jealousy, while the beauty of Jane Seymour, one of her attendants, attracted his regard. Anne's sister-in-law, lady Rochford, a woman whose vile character shortly after appeared, accused her of incestuous commerce with her brother; some other individuals of meaner rank about the court were also said to be the queen's paramours. While Henry's mind, already prejudiced, was under the influence of these charges, a tournament took place at Greenwich, in which lord Rochford successfully engaged. Anne, as might be expected from her lively character, took much interest in the sports, and by the misrepresentations of enemies her conduct appeared to Henry to be of a criminal character. He hastily retired to Westminster, leaving orders that the queen should remain in her apartments.* The next day she proceeded towards London, anxious to ascertain the cause of the king's sudden displeasure, when the duke of Norfolk and others of the council came on board her barge, and produced an order for her committal to the Tower. On being informed of the charges brought against her, she declared their falsehood and her own innocence. On entering the prison, her courage failed for a short time. A succession of hysterical fits came on, during which she uttered some incoherent expressions which were misrepresented by her enemies, but when these emotions had subsided, she again protested her innocence; at the same

* Mr. Turner refers to some documents, which indicate that the plans against Anne Boleyn were arranged previously to this scene at Greenwich. ii. 436.

time considering her fate as sealed, she expressed her hopes of another and a better world. Religion indeed was her only support, all the circumstances which surrounded were calculated to depress. Her own uncle's wife, the duchess of Norfolk, was appointed to be her companion, whose enmity was gratified by the office of drawing from Anne admissions which might be distorted into evidence against her. The proceedings need not be minutely detailed. Only one of the basest of those who were accused could be brought, by any means, to make any thing like an acknowledgment of guilt, and that was only a general expression, "that he deserved well to die," nor were any of them confronted with the queen. The queen herself wrote a very powerful letter to the king, in which she averred her innocence. She was tried before the peers of the realm, and by them found guilty of treason, in having said and done what was "to the slander of the issue between the king and her." But the trial was little more than a mockery of justice; only twenty-six of the fifty-three peers of the realm were present; the duke of Norfolk, a bigoted Romanist, and a jealous relative, was the presiding officer of this court, which sat within the Tower; and so little were the charges brought home, that Meterin, a foreigner who was in London at the time, has stated, that the magistrates of London and several others who were there, said they saw no evidence against Anne; only it appeared that it was resolved to be rid of her. Others have given similar testimony.

On the sentence being pronounced, Anne Boleyn again made a solemn protestation of her innocence, expressing a steadfast hope of another and a better life, and a belief that God had taught her to know how to die. Upon the fourth day after condemnation, (May 19th 1536,) she was beheaded, and suffered with constancy and courage which has seldom been equalled. Her last words were, "To Christ I commend my soul." There is now no necessity to enter into a defence of this much-injured queen. It has been well observed, that every attempt to blast the character of Anne Boleyn has only tended to confirm the general belief of her integrity. Henry himself offered perhaps the strongest testimony in her favour, when, on the third day after her execution, he married Jane Seymour. The important part in the reformation taken by Anne Boleyn, is sufficiently pointed out by the bigoted Romanist cardinal Pole, who, writing to the king soon after, styles queen Anne the king's "domestic evil," "the cause of all his errors," "and that from her descended all disorders;" a protestant will not desire more favourable testimony.

Cranmer's conduct in this, as in almost every important act of his life, has been misrepresented. He was neither intimidated, nor ductile to Henry's purposes. He seems to have been the only person who offered any opposition to the king's

proceedings. Henry appears to have expected this, and that he might avoid Cranmer's personal remonstrances, immediately upon the queen's committal to the Tower, the primate was ordered to confine himself to Lambeth. But he wrote to the king, and though he did not venture to assert Anne's innocence of charges which he was told could be proved, he expressly said, he thought "that she could not be culpable." When a fuller statement of the accusations against the queen had been communicated to him, he still professed himself unconvinced, though he considered her deserving of punishment if guilty. After the queen's condemnation, a suit to annul her marriage with Henry was brought before the archbishop for judgment. This it was his duty, as metropolitan, to determine. The queen confessed certain lawful impediments to her marriage, probably some previous engagement or promise to another suitor. Whatever they might be, it was Cranmer's duty to pronounce sentence according to the evidence before him, and the admission of the party herself of course was conclusive. He declared the marriage void, but that he showed "zeal" to arrive at this decision, as the Romanists have asserted, is an unfounded allegation.

That the queen herself should acquiesce in this decree, or even promote it, is not surprising;—maternal affection would render her anxious not to excite the king's displeasure farther, lest it should fall upon her child; and she could not be unwilling to die by a less painful end than burning, which was the sentence pronounced upon her;—other reasons also might be alleged.

The important part taken by Anne Boleyn in promoting the reformation, required this notice of the proceedings against her; no protestant need to wish that any obscurity should be thrown over them. It may be observed, that the hasty marriage of Henry to another protestant prevented the pope from attempting to reconcile the kingdom with the see of Rome.

The fall of the queen encouraged the Romanists more boldly to oppose the attacks then making upon their superstitions; but while the convocation was engaged in discussing their complaints, the king sent a message, enjoining that all things should be abolished which could not be supported by scripture. Cranmer spoke strongly to the same effect, while bishop Fox, who had lately returned from Germany, told the clergy what was passing in other countries, and that it was impossible for them any longer to keep men ignorant of the word of God. After several debates, a series of doctrinal articles were sanctioned by the clergy, which were set forth in the following year, (1537,) with considerable enlargements and additions, by royal authority. This work was entitled "The Institution of a Christian Man," but was more commonly known by the title of the bishops' book. Although not free from the errors of popery, particularly on the subject of the sacrament, yet there is far more of gospel truth in these articles, than had been

publicly set forth by authority in England for many centuries. The great doctrine of justification by faith is clearly inculcated; upon that point Cranmer succeeded in introducing a statement drawn up by himself, which will be found in the present volume. On other points also there is a decided departure from the church of Rome, and the principle that matters should in all respects be conformed as much as possible to the primitive church, is maintained. Much of the work is derived from the confession of Augsburg, and other writings of the Lutheran divines.* The mixed contents of this work show how severe the contest was between the different parties.

The work was imperfect, owing to the influence of Gardiner, and the darkness of the king's views on many subjects, which interfered with and limited Cranmer's statements of the truth, nor was his own mind yet fully emancipated from error upon several points. As Strype observes, "We find many popish errors here, mixed with evangelical truths; which must either be attributed to the defectiveness of our prelates' knowledge as yet in true religion, or as being the principles and opinions of the king, or both. Let not any be offended herewith, but let him rather take notice what a great deal of gospel doctrine here came to light, and not only so, but was owned and propounded by authority, to be believed and practised. The sun of truth was now but rising, and breaking through the thick mists of that idolatry, superstition, and ignorance, which had so long prevailed, and was not yet advanced to its meridian brightness."

The error respecting the Lord's supper being retained by the king and all the leading ecclesiastics, led to some painful results about this period. Several most excellent followers of Christ, who had adopted the clearer and more decided views of the Swiss reformers, were prosecuted for heresy, and the histories of that day contain in particular, the account of the noble stand made by the martyr Lambert against Henry and his ecclesiastics. Gardiner and his party urged forward these prosecutions, while Cranmer and Cromwell rather witnessed than encouraged the course which Henry chose to adopt. In fact, the arguments and writings of these reformers, especially those of Frith, appear first to have shaken the Romish views of the sacrament held by Cranmer. The archbishop's officers wished Frith to make his escape while in their custody, but he refused, considering it his duty publicly to declare his opinions.

The minds of the leaders were not sufficiently enlightened to discern the errors of Romanism respecting the sacrament; nor did they clearly perceive that the principles of christianity forbid the infliction of punishment upon others, because they differ in matters of faith. But the particulars recorded of the part taken in these tragedies by the principal reformers, owing to the official situations they held, and from Lambert

* See Dr. Lawrence's Bampton Lectures.

having appealed to the king, show evidently that they were actuated by a different spirit from that of Gardiner and his colleagues. No protestant will defend or excuse the conduct of Cranmer, but it is evident that he acted from the conviction of his own mind, though erroneous, and not from any disposition for sanguinary intolerance, or time-serving submission to the views of others. The remarks of Melancthon on the case of Servetus, twenty years afterwards, show how little even the mildest characters of that day understood, in this respect, the principles by which their actions ought to have been governed.

In August, 1537, another work was finished, the completion of which filled Cranmer with the most lively joy. It was the printing of a new and revised translation of the holy bible in English, under his own patronage. Coverdale had completed a version, the printing of which was finished in October, 1535. This edition was allowed by royal authority. In 1536, Cromwell published injunctions to the clergy, in which he commanded that the whole bible, in Latin and in English, should be provided for every church, and laid in the choir, where all persons should be encouraged to look and read therein. Gardiner and the papists strongly opposed that translation; they told the king that there were many faults in the book, on which account it ought to be suppressed. Henry asked whether it maintained any heresies. Gardiner did not venture to assert this, upon which the king emphatically replied, "Then, in God's name, let it be issued among our people." On another occasion the king and Gardiner having argued in defence of tradition, as equal in authority to the writings of the evangelists, Cranmer replied in a satisfactory manner, and Henry bade Gardiner be silent, adding, "My lord of Canterbury is too old a scholar for such truants as we are."

As soon as Cranmer received some copies of the new edition, he exclaimed, "Glory to God," and immediately forwarded one to Cromwell, requesting him to obtain permission from the king, that it might be bought and read within the realm.

Upon learning that the authorization had been granted, he wrote that it afforded him more joy than the gift of a thousand pounds. In another letter to Cromwell, fifteen days after, he again refers to the royal authority having been procured, and says, "For the which act, not only the king's majesty, but also you, shall have a perpetual laud and memory of all them that are now, or hereafter shall be, God's faithful people, and the favourers of his word. And this deed you shall hear of at the great day, when all things shall be opened and made manifest. For our Saviour Christ saith in the gospel, that whosoever shrinketh from him and his word, and is abashed to profess and set it forth before men in this world, he will refuse him at that day; and contrary, whosoever constantly doth profess him and his word, and studieth to set that forward in this

world, Christ will declare the same at the last day, before his Father, and all his angels, and take upon him the defence of those men." By the royal authority, commandment was shortly after made, that every curate should possess an English bible, that he might learn to know God and to instruct his parishioners, and that every abbey should have six.

The people rejoiced to hear the word of God in their own tongue. The copies set up in St. Paul's and other churches, were constantly surrounded by persons eagerly listening to those who read aloud the word of life. We, who are familiarly acquainted with the contents of the bible from an early age, can form no adequate idea of the sensation caused amongst the people at large, by the completion of this great work; especially when in the year 1539, a revised edition, called Cranmer's great bible, was published; for the former edition, consisting only of fifteen hundred copies, could but imperfectly supply the demand. The size of the volume and its price, prevented the generality of the people from being acquainted with its contents, excepting by means of the public readers already mentioned;* but these readings led to conversations among those who were thus assembled, and the knowledge of divine truth was more generally diffused. It became a general and a popular concern, in which all ranks and ages felt themselves personally interested. In the preface to the bible, Cranmer gave many excellent suggestions to all who perused the work. Fox and Strype have recorded several interesting narratives, connected with these proceedings and the bitter opposition of ignorant and bigoted Romanists. From a letter of Grafton the printer, it is evident that the only patrons he looked for among the prelates were Cranmer, Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, and Latimer, bishop of Worcester.

The great eagerness with which the English bible was received by the people, is referred to by Robert Wisdom, a prisoner in the Lollard's tower during this reign. Being accused of having said, that he trusted "to see the day when maids will sing the scripture at their wheels, and ploughmen at their plough," he replies, "I thank God, through my Lord Jesus Christ, *I have seen that day*, and I know husbandmen and men of occupation at this day, as well seen or better, in the scriptures, than a great many priests; yea than some that were heads, and are called rabbi and master doctor at every word. The name of God be blessed for it!"

Nor should we forget that this great work has come down to us, sealed with the testimony unto death of three who were

* The price of the English bible, of the largest volume, (and as yet scarcely any small ones had been printed,) was fixed, in 1540, to be ten shillings unbound, and not above twelve shillings well bound and clasped, but this was equal to five pounds at the present day. A bible now may be purchased for three or four shillings, about equal to fourpence at that period!

main instruments in setting forth the first edition of the English scriptures. Tindal the first translator, Rogers the editor of the first edition, and Cranmer the great patron and supporter of the work—all these laid down their lives in this cause!

The dissolution of the larger monasteries now took place. For the particulars connected with these proceedings, the reader must be referred to the histories of that period, where he will find numerous facts relative to those establishments, which cannot be controverted by all the artful excuses of the Romish historians. These measures were warmly opposed by the papists, who availed themselves of the influence they still exercised over the ignorant and superstitious minds of the great mass of the people. They excited rebellions in Lincolnshire and other parts of England, which were suppressed with difficulty. The emperor and the pope rejoiced to hear of the commotions, and the latter employed cardinal Pole, a member of the royal family of England, who was now at open enmity with Henry, to encourage the insurrections. Pole was sent to the Netherlands as legate, that he might be near at hand to the English rebels. He was supplied with a papal manifesto, in which the pope (Paul III.) strongly approved the rebellion, and exhorted the people to attend to the recommendations of Pole; he also had letters to the kings of Scotland and France, and the regent of the Low Countries, admonishing them to further his proceedings. But before the cardinal could arrive at his post, the insurgents were suppressed, and their leaders executed—the Romish historian Saunders styles them martyrs! After residing some months in the Netherlands, Pole found he could hope for little success from the limited correspondence he was enabled to hold with the malecontents; and being discountenanced by the potentates of France and the Low Countries, whose political interests at that time rendered peace with England desirable, he returned to Italy. The important measure of the dissolution of the larger monasteries proceeded rapidly, and the deceptions which had been practised within their walls were publicly exposed. Many minute particulars have been related respecting them by Fuller and others, which do not rest upon the uncertain authority of one or two writers, as modern Romanists would represent, but are described by several contemporary authors, who refer to facts then generally known, and to public documents, some of which still remain, while it is certain that many others were destroyed during queen Mary's reign, by commissioners appointed for that purpose, whose instructions have been preserved! Nor was the provision made for the monks and nuns so insufficient for their support, as often has been represented. The pensions allowed to those not notoriously of infamous character, were enough to maintain single persons in comfort at that day. In some instances the allowances thus given amounted to more

than half of the full revenues of the establishments. This should be noticed, as it shows the reason why so many of the monks, although papists in their hearts, obtained preferment in the church, from patrons who were anxious to resume the pensions they had to pay out of the revenues of which they had become possessed. Private cupidity thus materially impeded the exertions of Cranmer and his associates; for while these Romish ecclesiastics outwardly conformed to the profession required, they could not be prevented from exercising most injurious influence in private.

Cranmer well knew the necessity for suppressing the monastic establishments; in the homily on good works, he describes their evils in strong terms, but he laboured earnestly for the right application of the revenues. He maintained that only the lands originally granted by the kings of England should revert to the present monarch, and urged that the remainder should be employed to endow additional bishoprics and schools, and various laudable and christian institutions. These designs were thwarted by the profuseness of Henry, the avaricious cupidity of the courtiers, and the importance of forming a party sufficiently powerful, whose interests might bind them to oppose the restoration of the strong holds of popery. That the revenues might have been employed more to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind cannot be doubted, so far as we can discern, but we may believe that all was overruled for good. The possession of these large incomes by lay proprietors benefited the land, while the dispersion among so many rendered their resumption in the reign of Mary impracticable, and popery, though it again ruled for a time, fell without a contest when deprived of the royal support. The most violent fulminations of papal wrath were denounced against all concerned in the suppression, and the part taken by Cranmer rendered him still more obnoxious at Rome. Meanwhile his persevering efforts, and those of his friends, for a more worthy use of these treasures, made the king displeased with the promoters of the new learning, especially as they openly advocated their views in the parliament. Gardiner and his party did not suffer so favourable an opportunity to pass unregarded, and the situation of political affairs increased their influence with the king, which they strengthened by writing and preaching against the papal supremacy.

The act of six articles accordingly was brought forward by the popish party under the royal sanction, and promoted by the king's personal influence. It was preceded by a recommendation from Henry, that a committee should be appointed to devise articles of religion which might be generally adopted. The leaders of each party were selected for this purpose, but their conferences ended as such attempts always have done. The duke of Norfolk then introduced proceedings which led to

the enactment of the act just mentioned, which was emphatically termed "the whip with six strings." By this law six of the principal errors of popery were again established upon pain of death. 1. The doctrine of transubstantiation; 2. The Romish communion in one kind; 3. Priests were forbidden to marry;* 4. Monastic vows were declared binding; 5. Private masses were sanctioned; 6. Confession was enjoined.

Cranmer argued boldly against the act; he spoke repeatedly, and at great length, against the measure; and when the king desired him to absent himself from the debates, he firmly but respectfully declined to comply, urging that he felt it was God's cause. Henry resolved to force the measure through; he came down in person to the house, where he declared himself in favour of the bill, which was urged forward with unusual rapidity, being introduced in the house of lords on the 7th of June and passed on the 10th. Cranmer, of course, was unable personally to contend with his sovereign; yet he not only opposed the passing of the act, but also protested against it. In his answer to the Devonshire rebels some years after, Cranmer expressly states, that this law would not have passed had not the king come down in person to the parliament house. The arguments of Cranmer were so weighty that the king desired to have a copy of them; whatever were the faults of Henry, he was too well aware of the value of his faithful and sincere counsellor, to allow him to be injured for the decided and bold part he had taken in this affair.†

The archbishop, being greatly depressed at this measure, Henry sent the duke of Norfolk and Cromwell, with others of the nobility, to dine with him at Lambeth, when they publicly delivered a message, that it was the king's pleasure he should be comforted, and not discouraged by what had passed; at the same time declaring that Cranmer had showed himself "greatly learned, and also discreet and wise." Cranmer acknowledged the king's kindness, and solemnly added, "I hope in God that hereafter my allegations and authorities shall take place, to the glory of God and the commodity of the realm"—yet the Romish historians have not hesitated to state that he not only complied with the enactments of the law, by sending his wife back to Germany, but that he also wrote to the king apologizing for and excusing his opposition to the act! It is true that he did send his wife again to her relations, to avoid the penalty of death denounced by the act, while many of the Romish ecclesiastics openly manifested their disregard both of the human

* At first the act was framed so as only to restrain priests from *lawful* connections. With much difficulty, Cromwell succeeded against the Romanists in making the prohibition generally applicable to *all* cases.

† Strype states reasons for believing that one point much urged by Cranmer in these debates was, that the penalty of death ought not to be imposed for mere matters of opinion.

and the divine law, as well as of their own vows of chastity; but he never subscribed, or declared, an assent to the law of six articles, nor was subscription required from any of the clergy.

Cranmer's writing sent to the king, was of a very different description from an excuse for his conduct.—It was his opinions *against* the six articles. In obedience to the king he caused his secretary to write them out. The secretary having done so went to deliver the book to his master, but found he had left Lambeth and was gone to Croydon. His own chamber also was locked and he had to proceed to London. In this dilemma he resolved to take the book with him, having been commanded to be very careful of it; for merely writing such a document was death by the law recently enacted. The secretary then took boat for Paul's wharf with some of the king's guard. When they arrived at Bankside they found the king in his barge, with many attendants, seeing a bear baited at the water's edge. The guard who were with the secretary dared not pass the king, accordingly the wherry was rowed near to the bank, when the bear breaking loose, such confusion ensued, that the book was loosed from under the secretary's girdle and fell into the river. He called to a bearward to secure it, the man did so, but before the secretary could get to him he had shown it to a priest, who perceiving the book was written against the six articles, told the bearward that whoever claimed it would be hanged. This fellow was a rank papist; finding that the book belonged to the archbishop, he refused to give it up, and told the secretary he hoped that both he and his master would be hanged for it. He continued in this mood, refusing to listen to the advice of a relative, who, at the desire of the secretary, invited him to supper, and offered him a sum of money if he would return the book, telling him that he would get neither thanks nor reward if he persisted. This was the result, for what had happened was told to Cromwell, who found the man the next morning at the court, looking for some of the Romish party to whom he might give the book. Cromwell at once took it from him, threatened him for meddling with papers belonging to a privy counsellor, and sent him away.

A general attempt was made to enforce the act of six articles, and in fourteen days five hundred persons, in London alone, were dragged from their families and committed to prison for offences against this law! The prisons being too small to contain them, some of the companies' halls were used as places of confinement. Audley, then lord chancellor, went to the king and represented the necessity of stopping such prosecutions. Cromwell, Cranmer, and some others, supported his application; orders were given to liberate the prisoners. Bonner, however, and his associates, were permitted to harass and put to death some individuals, while a deep impression was made upon the spirits of the protestants both at home and abroad by

these measures. The German princes also interposed, and Melancthon wrote a faithful epistle to Henry. The act of six articles however promoted the reformation in a manner its authors never intended. Many excellent men were compelled to take refuge on the continent for a time, from whence they returned much advanced in christian knowledge by their communications with the German and Swiss reformers.

During the dinner at Lambeth already mentioned, Cromwell made an observation to the archbishop upon the remarkable manner in which the king took in good part from him, that opposition to his royal will which he would not endure from others, and contrasted the primate's conduct with that of Wolsey. This led to an observation from the duke of Norfolk; a personal altercation ensued between Cromwell and the duke, which the latter never forgave. Cromwell, who had lately been created earl of Essex, now stood on the brink of ruin. He had many enemies in consequence of his sudden rise, and was unpopular among the people on several public accounts. The king heard numerous complaints of his minister, and listened to them the more readily from being displeased with Cromwell, who, after the death of Jane Seymour, had promoted the marriage with Anne of Cleves, with whom he was much disgusted. Henry also was enamoured of the niece of the duke of Norfolk, who strongly urged proceedings against Cromwell. By the influence of the Romish party, Cromwell was accused of heresy and other charges, which however rather show the malice of his enemies than any great delinquency on his part, and, as Fuller states from sir Edward Coke, his adversaries deemed it safer to proceed by a bill of attainder than to allow the usual form of trial. At this juncture only one among Cromwell's numerous friends and dependents appeared in his behalf—that one was Cranmer. He has been represented as attaching himself to Cromwell while his fortunes prevailed, and then joining his enemies; but he stood forward and pleaded for his associate, though in opposition to the royal will and the united influence of those in power.

Cromwell, however, was not guiltless in a legal point of view: he had not only favoured the reformers to an extent then unlawful, but he had in some instances spoken of limiting the power of the king, and had accepted bribes, which was too commonly practised at that day. The laws against treason also then comprehended much which would now merely be called errors in judgment. It was not, therefore, difficult to find such grounds to justify the proceedings against Cromwell, that Cranmer could not refuse to acquiesce in the sentence pronounced against him. Cromwell, however, may be considered as suffering in the cause of the reformation, if not for its doctrines, and although the Romanists have falsely represented him as recanting previous to his death, his prayer when on the scaffold,

sufficiently manifests that he died in the profession of the real "catholic" faith, not that of the church of Rome. He was beheaded July 28th, 1540. Strype, in his Memorials, fully shows how indefatigable Cromwell was in promoting the reformation.

Cranmer now stood almost alone. Bishop Fox was dead, Cromwell was condemned and executed, Latimer and Shaxton were deprived of their bishopries and imprisoned under the act of six articles. When thus exposed, the enemies of the truth did not allow him to remain long unmolested. Even while Cromwell was a prisoner, they caused Cranmer to be included in a commission which was directed to inquire concerning the articles of religion, and to explain some of the chief doctrines. They had prepared a document according to their own views, but Cranmer refused his assent, although his remaining friends urged him to comply, representing the danger of opposition to the king's will. He replied, that "there was but one truth in the articles to be concluded upon, which though they hid for a time, the king would at length perceive, and he knew the king's nature so well, that he would never afterwards credit or trust them." Cranmer further warned them to beware, and faithfully to discharge their consciences. He went to the king and prevailed so far as to have much that was objectionable put aside. The result was a statement of doctrine mainly derived from the Augsburg confession, though in some points warped to meet the views of the Romanists, and an abatement of the penalties of the act of six articles. The recent events, however, induced Cranmer to retire as much as possible from public life, and to confine himself to the duties of his station. The archbishop was now in the furnace of affliction, and he was supported from on high. His energies rose with the difficulties in which he was placed—he bore open testimony to the truth and prevailed.

Among other occupations in the year 1540, we find Cranmer busily engaged in reforming the ecclesiastical foundation at Canterbury, and establishing a grammar-school there. Some of the commissioners would have restricted this to gentlemen's children, but Cranmer differed from them, saying, that "poor men's children are many times endued with more singular gifts of nature, which also are the gifts of God, as with eloquence, memory, apt pronunciation, sobriety, and such like; and also commonly more apt to apply to their study, than is the gentleman's son delicately educated."* The others again urged that disorders in the state were likely to ensue from bringing up children above the vocation of their parents. To this Cranmer replied in strong terms, that "utterly to exclude the poor man's son from the benefit of learning, is as much as to say that Almighty God should not be at liberty to bestow his great gifts of mercy, but as we and other men shall appoint them to be

* An author of that day recommends gentlemen, "who know not how to write," to notch sticks to assist their memory.

employed, according to our fancy, and not according to his most godly will and pleasure, who giveth his gifts of learning and perfections in all sciences, to all kinds and states of persons indifferently." He added other observations of equal force, concluding thus, "If the gentleman's son be apt to learning, let him be admitted; if not, let the poor man's child that is apt enter in his room." Cranmer was actively employed at this period in causing various superstitious relics to be removed from the churches under his care. We also find him concerned in the passing of a law which was intended to check the luxurious life of some among the clergy.

In the autumn of 1541, Cranmer was again placed in a situation of political difficulty, by being informed of the dissolute course of life which had been pursued by the queen, Catharine Howard. After consulting with the lord chancellor, the earl of Hertford, Cranmer, as usual, pursued the straight-forward course, and putting the documents which had been communicated to him into the king's hands, left the event. Had her guilt not been fully established Cranmer must have fallen; he knew this, but he used no undue means to influence the result. The particulars are fully related by Herbert.—The Romanists have represented it as "a plot woven by the industry of the protestants," but the queen's misconduct was proved by incontestable evidence. The documents which still remain prove her culpable, and show that no conspiracy against her existed. She admitted her guilt upon the scaffold, where she was executed with lady Rochford, who had been the confidante of her profligacy. It was not forgotten that the latter had been the principal cause of the deaths of Anne Boleyn and her own husband. In the same year, Cranmer was engaged in correcting disorders which prevailed in All Souls' College, Oxford.

In the convocation which met A. D. 1542, the Romanists again brought forward their accusations against the English version of the scriptures, and by their influence it was resolved that the bible should not be used in the churches until it had been revised, for which purpose committees were appointed. Their design evidently was, not to produce an improved version, but to adopt any means which might impede the progress of scriptural knowledge. To perplex matters still further, Gardiner brought forward a long list of Latin and Greek words, which he pretended could not be correctly rendered into English. He therefore desired that they should be left untranslated, which of course would have rendered the bibles almost useless to unlearned men. Cranmer defeated these designs by obtaining the king's sanction for the committal of this revision to the universities, instead of the Romish prelates. He also urged additional measures for the revisal of the service-books, and for depriving the images of saints of their ornaments and other marks of respect which were still common. The

invocation of saints in the litany, had been ordered to be discontinued in 1538. Nor did Cranmer rest until he had obtained the king's authority for a selection of prayers and offices of devotion in the English language. This, however, was not printed till the year 1546. It is known by the name of king Henry VIII.'s Primer, and contains much that is excellent, though some addresses to the virgin, and other traces of popish superstitions remain. A letter written by Cranmer, in 1544, to the king, shows his anxious desire to introduce what may be considered as the commencement of congregational singing. Thomas Sternhold, one of the first translators of the psalms into English metre, was groom of the robes to Henry VIII., and of the bed-chamber to Edward VI.

In 1543, the contest as to reading the scriptures was again renewed. Directions were given for compiling another formulary of faith. Tindal's version of the bible was prohibited, while subsequent versions were allowed, but only under strict limitations. None were to read the bible aloud, without license from the king or the ordinary. Noblemen and gentlemen might cause the bible to be read to their families and servants; and householders might read it to themselves privately. But all women, except the families of the nobility and gentry, and all artificers, labourers, or servants, with all persons of the lower classes, were strictly PROHIBITED from perusing the word of God! Nor was a free use of the English scriptures again permitted during that reign.*

The free use of the scriptures being thus prohibited, another exposition of faith was set forth, under the title of "A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man." It is very similar in contents to the former publication, entitled "The Bishops' Book," but although in many respects it set forth the Lutheran doctrines, more of the Romish leaven was infused, doubtless by the interference of Gardiner, at whose instance it was called "The King's Book." This will clearly appear to the reader upon his comparing the statements respecting the doctrine of justification in the two "books." Gardiner was so satisfied with this compilation as to write, "the king's majesty hath, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, componed all matters of religion." Cranmer, on the other hand, wrote annotations upon the "necessary doctrine," refuting some of the errors contained therein, and stating the doctrines of truth.

* That this prohibition was generally enforced, appears from a writing upon a spare leaf of a copy of the treatise on inventions, by Polydore Vergil, which was penned by a shepherd to whom it had belonged. "When I kepe M. Letymer's shype, I bout thys boke, when the testament was obbergated that shepherdys might not rede it. I pray God amend that blyndness. Wryt by Robert Wyllyams' keppyng shepe upon Seynbury hill, 1546." Shepherds NOW may read the bible.

The copy is still extant, and some of his remarks are printed in this work.*

In 1543, we find Cranmer much troubled by disputes which prevailed among the clergy at Canterbury. He sent for them to Croydon, where he reasoned, instructed, and exhorted them as the occasion required. To allay the discord which had arisen, he appointed six preachers to officiate in the cathedral, three of each party, telling them it was the king's pleasure.

The dissatisfaction of the Romish clergy against Cranmer, now began to assume a darker form. It was commonly reported that "Gardiner had bent his bow to shoot at some of the head deer," and at his instigation or encouragement, several of the clergy of Canterbury engaged in machinations against the archbishop. Meanwhile proceedings were commenced at Windsor which caused three honest men to be burned for heresy; it was intended to implicate persons of rank, and even to include the new queen, Catharine Parr, who was a zealous supporter of the reformation. The plan was disappointed by a servant of the queen, through whose activity an emissary of Gardiner was way-laid, and some papers taken from him: these being shown to the king, he pardoned all against whom proceedings had been commenced. This ruthless zeal of Gardiner so disgusted Henry that he never liked him afterwards, nor placed the same degree of confidence in him as formerly.

The history of the plot against Cranmer is minutely given by Strype, but is too long for more than a brief summary to be given in this place. When the articles and depositions against the archbishop had been prepared, they were presented to the king, who at once saw the real object of the accusers. He ordered his barge one evening to Lambeth, and desired Cranmer to come on board. He then told him that he now knew who was the greatest heretic in Kent, giving him the papers at the same time. Cranmer was much surprised and grieved at their contents; he entreated Henry to appoint a commission to examine the accusations. Henry replied, he would do so, and nominated the archbishop for one. Cranmer entreated this might not be, as it would appear unfair to appoint a man to be judge in his own cause, but Henry insisted on his nomination, adding he was sure that Cranmer would speak "the truth of himself if he had offended." The primate left the investigation to two of his officers named Cocks and Hussey, who being secret favourers of popery, the delinquents had nearly escaped; but the archbishop's friends showed the king it was necessary that more strict examiners should be appointed. Dr. Leigh and Dr. Rowland Taylor were then sent, who caused the papers of the suspected

* The manuscript copy exists in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. A part was printed by Strype; the whole is given in L. Richmond's Fathers of the English church.

parties to be seized; letters from Gardiner were found, and the whole plot was discovered in a few hours. Among others, Dr. Thornton and Dr. Barber were implicated. The former had been appointed suffragan of Dover by Cranmer, and frequently ate at his table; the latter was a civilian whom the archbishop salaried and retained in his family, as a constant adviser in matters relating to the ecclesiastical law!

When the letters of these two men were forwarded to Cranmer, he was much shocked at the discovery of their treachery. Taking them apart at his palace of Bekesbourne, he told them that some persons in whom he placed much confidence, had disclosed his secrets, and had even accused him of heresy. He then asked their advice how such delinquents should be dealt with. These two perfidious men loudly censured such villainy, affirming that the traitors deserved death; one of them added, that if an executioner were wanting, he would perform the office himself! At these words the archbishop lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "O Lord, most merciful God, in whom may a man now trust! It is truly said, Cursed is he that confideth in man, and putteth his trust in an arm of flesh. There never was man handled as I am, but thou, O Lord, hast evermore defended me, and lent me one great friend and master, (meaning the king,) without whose protection I were not able to stand one day; I praise thy name therefore." He then turned towards them, demanding, "Know ye these letters, my masters?" They immediately fell down upon their knees, imploring forgiveness, and confessing how they had been tempted to join these machinations. "Well," said Cranmer, "God make you both good men, I never deserved this at your hands; but ask God forgiveness, against whom you have highly offended. If such men as you, are not to be trusted, how should I live? I perceive now that there is no fidelity or truth among men; I am brought to this point now, that I fear my left hand will accuse my right hand. I need not much marvel thereat, for our Saviour Christ truly prophesied of such a world to come in the latter days. I beseech him of his great mercy to finish that time shortly." He forgave them, and never again alluded to their treachery, but he dismissed them from his service. Such was the conduct of Cranmer when his own personal safety was aimed at. His forgiveness of injuries was so notorious that it became a by-word, "Do my lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and you make him your friend for ever." Some who have treated his memory hardly, as they could not deny this distinguishing trait in his character, have endeavoured to represent his forgiveness of injuries to be no virtue, saying that resentment is effaced by present interest in such minds as they would have us believe Cranmer's to have been. But the case of Thornton and Barber effectually dissipates this false representation. Cranmer's interest in their case evidently was, not to let such persons escape with impunity;

still less to interpose and prevent their experiencing that just punishment which the king wished to inflict upon all who had joined in the conspiracy. If we fully examine the particulars of this history, we shall see that Cranmer was actuated by the gospel principles, which command us to forgive our enemies—with those who consider it a proof of weakness so to do, the follower of Christ need not argue.

The confessions of some of these men were printed by Strype. He found a paper apparently written by Cranmer about this period, "On the consolation possessed by christians against the fear of death;" and adds, "compiled, I guess, as well for his own use, being not inapprehensive of his ticklish station and danger from so many implacable enemies which he had, as also to be inserted in the king's book."

The papists were never weary of their attempts against Cranmer. They persuaded a bigoted Romanist, sir John Gostwick, member for Bedfordshire, to charge the archbishop of heresy in the parliament-house, on account of some sermons preached in Kent. Henry was not a monarch who would suffer such proceedings. Inquiring how this Bedfordshire knight should be so well informed of what passed in Kent, he called him "varlet," and threatened to treat him severely if he did not acknowledge his fault to Cranmer, and implore pardon; adding, "If they do so now, what will they do with him when I am gone?" Gostwick followed the royal advice without delay.

Another remarkable instance of Henry's interference for Cranmer is recorded. The papists in the privy council besought the king to give them leave to examine the charges against Cranmer, and to commit him to the Tower if they found occasion; assuring the king if that were done many would come forward against him with just accusations who were now afraid to do so. Henry discerned their purpose, but consented that Cranmer should be called before the council on the day following, and gave them leave to commit him to the Tower if they saw sufficient cause.

At midnight the king sent for the archbishop to tell him what had passed. He thanked his majesty for the previous notice, and expressed his willingness to be committed to the Tower, if he might afterwards be fairly heard. Henry stood amazed at his simplicity, and told him that when once in prison, three or four false knaves would easily be found to witness against him. Henry then directed Cranmer to request the council to confront his accusers with him, and if they refused to do this, he was to produce a ring, which the king then gave him, by which they would know that the affair was revoked from them for the royal determination.

The following morning, Cranmer was summoned to attend the council at eight o'clock, but was kept waiting in the anti-room among the attendants nearly an hour. Dr. Butts, the

king's physician, informed Henry of this new promotion of the archbishop to be a serving-man. "It is well enough," replied Henry, "I shall talk with them by-and-by." At length Cranmer was admitted. The councillors told him that a complaint was made, that he, and others by his permission, had infected the realm with heresy, and therefore it was the king's pleasure that he should be committed to the Tower for trial. Cranmer reasoned with them, and urged that his accusers might be brought forward, but finding this was refused, he produced his majesty's ring. At the sight of it, they rose and went to the king, fearful of the consequences of their conduct. Henry gave them that reception which he was accustomed to give to those with whom he was seriously displeased; saying, he perceived well how the world went among them, and commanded them to lay aside their malice towards the primate. This was the last attempt against Cranmer while Henry lived. The king possessed much discernment; referring to a change in Cranmer's armorial bearings, from three cranes to three pelicans, he told him to be ready like the pelican, to shed his blood for his spiritual children who were brought up in the faith of Christ, adding, "You are likely to be tasted at length, if you stand to your tackling."

There is another anecdote connected with these plots against Cranmer. Sir Thomas Seymour spoke against him to the king, accusing him of niggardly conduct, and a design to amass wealth for his children by adopting a penurious and improper style of living. Henry took no notice of this complaint till some days after, when he sent sir Thomas to Lambeth with a message, at the archbishop's dinner hour. Seymour now found how widely different the case in reality was from what he had stated, and saw that ample provision was made for the household and for visitors, as well as a liberal supply for the poor, while all was conducted with propriety. On his return Henry sternly inquired, "Dined you not with my lord?" Seymour perceived the king's meaning, and, kneeling down, entreated pardon for having made a false report. The king rebuked him severely, saying, that he saw through their devices, and knew that their desire was to be allowed to participate in the bishop's lands, as they had done in the estates of the monasteries; but in this they should be disappointed, and as for Cranmer, he well knew that the archbishop injured himself by his liberality and hospitality. Besides keeping a proper order in his household, suited to his station, Cranmer always had several strangers staying with him; being desirous by his intercourse with them to promote their spiritual welfare, and also to forward the great work of the reformation. Thus the attention he manifested towards the earl of Cassilis, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Solway, in 1542, was the means of effecting a

change in his views, and that nobleman afterwards became a promoter of the reformation in his own country.

A more pleasing evidence of Cranmer's influence with the king, was the gradual adoption of several prayers in English for the public daily services. This was a most important step towards a more spiritual form of worship, in which the people might feel themselves interested. Gardiner and the papists, of course, endeavoured to counteract this measure. Another important work which Cranmer earnestly laboured to effect, was a reformation of the canon law; but at that time he could only accomplish some preliminary arrangements. He succeeded, however, in abolishing the creeping to the cross, with other superstitious observances. He, by this time, had begun to introduce a more regular system of preaching than formerly had been customary. Henry also directed him to prepare a formulary whereby the mass might be changed into a communion. It was evident that the reformers were again exercising a beneficial influence.

Henry's death now approached. Upon discovering a new instance of the treachery of Gardiner towards the queen,* he ordered him to be excluded from the council, and even from the royal presence, and having had his last testament drawn up afresh, he ordered Gardiner's name not to be again included in the list of his executors. In other respects the will remained unaltered, the king's ill state of health probably having prevented him from giving that complete revision which would have excluded some directions that partook of popish superstition. The Romish party now rapidly lost ground in the king's favour. Their leader, the duke of Norfolk, in his turn, was charged with high treason, and though his offences do not appear to have deserved to be so called, yet he fell within the letter of the law. He was attainted and condemned; but the decease of Henry, on the day appointed for his execution, saved Norfolk from experiencing the fate of Cromwell, to whose death he had been so instrumental.

The following particulars relative to the death of Henry VIII. are from Fox. "After long languishing, infirmity growing more and more upon him, his physicians at length perceiving that he would away, and yet not daring to discourage him with death, for fear of the act past before in parliament, that none should speak any thing of the king's death, (the act being made only for soothsayers and talkers of prophecies,) moved them that were about the king to put him in remembrance of his mortal state and fatal infirmity. Which when the rest were in dread to do, M. Denny, boldly coming to the king, told him what case he was in, to man's judgment not like to live, and therefore exhorted him to prepare himself to death, calling

* See the Life of Catherine Parr.

himself to remembrance of his former life, and to call upon God in Christ betimes for grace and mercy, as becomes every good christian man to do.

"Although the king was loth to hear any mention of death, yet perceiving the same to rise upon the judgment of his physicians and feeling his own weakness, he disposed himself more quietly to hearken to the words of exhortation, and to consider his past life. Which though he much accused,* yet, said he, the mercy of Christ is able to pardon me all my sins, though they were greater than they are. M. Denny, being glad to hear him thus speak, required to know his pleasure, whether he would have any learned man sent for to confer with, and to open his mind unto. The king answered, that if he had any, he would have Dr. Cranmer, who was then at Croydon. M. Denny asking whether he would have him sent for, 'I will first,' said the king, 'take a little sleep, and then, as I feel myself, I will advise upon the matter.'

"After an hour or two, the king awaking, and finding his feebleness increase, commanded Dr. Cranmer to be sent for; but, before he could come, the king was speechless, and almost senseless. Notwithstanding, he reaching his hand to Dr. Cranmer, held him fast, but could utter no words, and scarcely was able to make any sign. Then the archbishop, exhorting him to put his trust in Christ, and to call upon his mercy, desired him, though he could not speak, yet to give some token with his eyes, or with his hand, that he trusted in the Lord. Then the king, holding him with his hand, did wring the archbishop's hand in his, as hard as he could, and so shortly after departed."

Fox was intimate with Morice, the archbishop's secretary, and there can be no doubt that this account of the last moments of Henry is correct. Without offering any observation thereon, it may be well to say that Fox states several circumstances which tend to show the intention of Henry, if he had survived, to have proceeded with the reformation. Fox adds, "But the secret workings of God's holy providence, which disposes all things according after his own wisdom and purpose, thought it good, rather by taking the king away, to reserve the accomplishment of this reformation of his church, to the peaceable times of his son Edward, and Elizabeth his daughter, whose hands were yet undefiled with any blood, and life unspotted with any violence or cruelty."†

* A French author of that day, named Thevet, a friar, states, that several English persons of rank had told him that the king in his latter days spoke with much compunction of his conduct towards queen Anne Boleyn. This is better authenticated than the tale of Saunders, which represents him as repenting the dissolution of the monasteries.

† Many persons will be surprised to hear that Henry VIII. was a monarch highly popular amongst his subjects, and that his death was very generally lamented; but this appears beyond a doubt from the testimony of contemporary historians. Strype has noticed it, and observes,

PART II.

Cranmer in the Reign of King Edward the Sixth.

Henry VIII. was succeeded by Edward VI., then a youth in the tenth year of his age. His reign was short, but his virtues and piety are recorded by every historian: even the Romanists scarcely attempt to depreciate his memory. During his reign the reformation proceeded with activity, and although much was left imperfect, yet the foundation was so firmly laid, that, through the divine blessing, it withstood the violence of queen Mary, his successor.

When we examine into English history we find that many causes united to oppose the labours of the reformers. During the two preceding reigns, the regal office had been administered with an authority almost unlimited: the sceptre was now in the hands of a child, and consequently the executive power rested with the ministers. Two of the principal, Wriothesly, lord chancellor, and Tonstal, the bishop of Durham, were Romanists, and in political ability they far exceeded the earl of Hertford and Cranmer, the leaders of the protestants.* The earl of Hertford, afterwards duke of Somerset, was appointed protector by general consent; his relation to the young king gave him a claim to that office, while his talents were not sufficient to excite the jealousy of his opponents. He was also expressly limited from acting without the advice and consent of the other executors. The disposition of Cranmer, as we have seen, did not incline him to take a leading part in political affairs; he neither possessed, nor desired to assume that influence by which Romish primates of former days had virtually ruled the nation. Thus the short reign of Edward VI. exhibited a stormy conflict of parties, the leaders of which sought chiefly to promote their own individual interests. These, it is true, inclined them generally to favour the reformation, and Cranmer, with

"This king, notwithstanding his rigorous government, and his round dealing with many, to the taking away of their lives, lived and died highly beloved of his subjects, whatever were the reasons of it; whether it were some of those princely qualities and excellent accomplishments that he was endued with, or the suppressing the ecclesiastical power, which was so oppressive to the people." The more fully we are aware of the extent to which the profligacy and tyranny of the church of Rome had proceeded, the less we are surprised at this. The various executions during Henry's reign having been carried into effect by sentence of law, he appears to have had no impression upon his mind that they were wrong.

* The extent of Romish influence at the commencement of this reign appeared from the magnificent exhibition of popish ceremonial at the funeral of Henry. The conduct of the chancellor, however, soon caused his power and influence to be lessened, and the protestants were enabled to proceed with more activity.

the most pious of his associates, were enabled to do much in promoting the truth. That they did not effect all they might have done is more than probable, but certainly those cannot fairly enter upon this question who do not estimate the peculiar circumstances of those times, and the situation of England, both in its foreign and domestic relations, which were more complicated at that period than in almost any other of its history.*

One of the earliest measures connected with ecclesiastical affairs, after the accession of Edward, was for the bishops to take out new commissions from the king, authorizing them to hold their respective offices. Cranmer set the example, and his conduct in thus departing from the high assumptions of the Romish clergy was one cause of their displeasure against him. It is probable that the archbishop thought this measure would assist to prevent those prelates who were still attached to Romanism from being active in opposing the reformation, but doubtless it also proceeded from the little estimation in which Cranmer held his honours and titles. That he set lightly by them, appears from a letter written by him to Gardiner, in May, 1535, when that busy prelate had represented the archbishop's title, "Primate of all England," as inconsistent with the king's supremacy. An extract may be inserted here as illustrating this trait in the character of Cranmer. After having shown that the titles were not inconsistent, he says, "All this notwithstanding, if the bishops of this realm pass no more of their names, styles, and titles, than I do of mine, the king's highness shall soon order the matter betwixt us all. And if I saw that my style were against the king's authority, whereunto I am specially sworn, I would sue myself unto his grace that I might leave it; and would have done so before this time. For I pray God never be merciful unto me at the general judgment, if I perceive in my heart that I set more by any title, name, or style that I write, than I do by the paring of an apple, further than it shall be to the setting forth of God's word and will. Yet I will not utterly excuse me herein. For God must be judge, who knoweth the bottom of my heart, and so do not I myself. But I speak for so much as I do feel in my heart. For many evil affections lie lurking there, and will not lightly be espied. But yet I would not gladly leave any just thing at the pleasure and suit of the bishop of Winchester, he being none otherwise affectionate unto me than he is.

"Even at the beginning of Christ's profession, Diotrephes desired to bear the pre-eminence in the church, as saith St. John in his last epistle. And since, he hath had more successors

* To say nothing of negotiations with the continental states, the protector in the early part of this reign was involved in a war with Scotland. Scarcely had this been terminated when the papists stirred up insurrections at home, which were followed by the dissentions among the nobility that terminated in the destruction of Somerset.

than all the apostles had, of whom have come all these glorious titles, styles, and pomps into the church. But I would that I, and all my brethren, the bishops, would leave all our styles, and write the style of our offices, calling ourselves the apostles of Jesus Christ; so that we took not upon us the name vainly, but were so even in deed. So that we might order our dioceses in such sort, that neither paper, parchment, lead, or wax, but the very christian conversation of the people, might be the letters and seals of our offices. As the Corinthians were unto Paul, unto whom he said, Ye are our letters, and the signs of our apostleship."

The proceedings of Cranmer at the coronation, and the open manifestation of piety by the protector, showed their determination to promote the progress of divine truth. One who could use in sincerity the prayer which was customarily offered up by Seymour, could not be a Romanist in principles or practice.

In Strype, Burnet, and other historians, will be found a minute account of the progress of the reformation during the short reign of Edward VI. The result may be thus summed up. The worship of images was prohibited; the saints and the virgin were no longer allowed to usurp any of that honour which is due unto God alone.—Transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass were no longer substituted for the true doctrine and regular administration of the Lord's supper.—The free use of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue was permitted to persons of every rank and condition. Human traditions were not referred to, as equal or superior in authority to the word of God.—Public prayers were no longer offered in an unknown language.—The clergy were not prohibited from marriage.—Belief in purgatory, indulgences, and all the gainful traffics of the Romish church were no longer sanctioned. But the results attained in that short reign were not confined to these benefits, considerable as they are. The great doctrine, that salvation is by CHRIST ALONE, was fully set forth to the people as the only ground for their hope and confidence—as the source of good works and holiness of heart and life, and this no longer obscured by the addition of man's devices, but fully and freely preached to all. The writings of the reformers, with the records of their proceedings, show that in no period of our history has the ROCK of salvation been more fully exhibited, or with more simplicity and power, than in those days. Let us remember that during the reign of Henry these blessings had been very imperfectly attained. It is true that the main fabric of popery had been demolished, and much of the rubbish of that system had been removed, but little of the spiritual edifice was built up. All the advantages just enumerated were attained during the six years in which the influence of Cranmer prevailed, although limited and thwarted in many respects. This summary may give some idea of what we owe

to him, and to the faithful witnesses who laboured with him in life, and bore testimony with him in death.

Nor is it difficult to adduce undoubted evidence that the progress here described actually was made. The book of homilies, the forty-two articles of religion drawn up by Cranmer and Ridley, the English liturgy and communion book, the catechism of dean Nowell, with Cranmer's short instruction in the christian religion—his treatise against unwritten verities, his defence of the true catholic doctrine of the sacrament—the proposed improvements in the canon law,—the general diffusion of knowledge respecting the errors of popery,—the care taken to select faithful and zealous preachers—the numerous publications setting forth gospel truth which issued from the press—but above all, the many editions of the English scriptures printed in this reign—all these are evidences which yet survive, and bear testimony to the active proceedings of the reformers of that period.

Cranmer's personal concern in the various labours just described is generally admitted, and is a sufficient answer to the allegations which represent him as an ambitious and active partisan in the political proceedings of that day, for one whose mind was so fully occupied by the subjects already mentioned, could not be found directing measures so contrary. What were considered the duties of his official station required his continual presence in the council, and frequent reference to him for advice; but he appears rather to have withdrawn from political power than to have sought it.

One of the earliest proceedings was to cause a general visitation of the kingdom, (which was divided into six districts,) by persons furnished with authority to promote the work of reformation, who were accompanied by preachers of ability to set forth the truth. The articles and injunctions prepared for these visitors are given by Strype in his Memorials. They show both the wisdom and care of the chief promoters of the good work, and also exhibit the state of corruption and superstition in which the bulk of the nation was still involved. Among other important injunctions, the due observance of the Lord's day was required; the bishops were to be careful to ordain none but such as were learned in the scriptures, and to inquire whether the word of God and the faith of Christ were preached purely and sincerely in every cure; also whether the clergy moved the people to hear and read the scriptures in English.

As preaching ever has been one of the most efficient means for diffusing the light of divine truth, Cranmer's attention was early called to the compiling of a book of homilies; an important and necessary work at that time, when a very small proportion of the clergy were able to prepare sermons for their

congregations.* Gardiner's concurrence in this work was requested, but he opposed it as much as possible, and with others of his party declared that no innovation whatever in religious matters could be made during the king's minority.† Cranmer, however, proceeded, and having himself written the homily on salvation, communicated it to Gardiner, who said he would admit the statements it contained, if they "could show him any old writer that wrote how faith excluded charity in the office of justification." This was not difficult to do, but Gardiner was determined not to be satisfied, and continued to wrangle on this subject. At that period he was confined in the Fleet, whither he had been sent by the council for his opposition to the proceedings of the government, which he had with much pertinacity endeavoured to counteract. He blamed the archbishop exceedingly "for troubling the people with a needless speculation," as he termed it—namely, "that we be justified by faith, without all works of the law." He said this was unnecessary, "because in baptism we are justified being infants," before we can talk of the justification we strive for; "for all men receive their justification in infancy in baptism, and if they fall after baptism, they must arise again by the sacrament of penance." But it is unnecessary to dwell upon the cavils, the errors, the railing, or the sophistry of Gardiner. The doctrines he advanced were not peculiar to himself; full replies to them will be found in the writings of every reformer, particularly in the volumes written by Cranmer himself immediately with reference to their discussions. Another subject of displeasure to this bigoted Romanist, was the order that a copy of the translation of Erasmus's paraphrase on the new testament should be set up in every church. The proceedings of Gardiner before his imprisonment, and during its continuance, plainly show the difference of the treatment he received, compared with that which he and his associates inflicted upon the followers of the truth in the succeeding reign. The opinion of the foreign reformers respecting the homilies, was, as may be supposed, widely different from that of Gardiner. In an epistle to the church of England, Bucer spoke highly of them; he "commended much the homily of faith," the nature and force of which was so clearly and soberly discussed; and wherein it was so well distinguished from faith which was dead. He much approved

* Warner observes, that the greatest hinderance which Cranmer met with in his design of reformation was the miserable condition of the parochial clergy, and the want of able men to propagate the doctrines of truth throughout the kingdom.

† Some images having been plucked down and destroyed at Portsmouth, Gardiner complained bitterly of such proceedings. He said that "such as were affected with the principle of breaking down images were hogs and worse than hogs, and were ever so considered in England, being called Lollards."

of "the manner of treating concerning the misery and death we are all lapsed unto by the sin of our first parent, and how we are rescued from this perdition only by the grace of God, and by the merit and resurrection of his Son; and how hereby we are justified in the sight of God, and adopted into the number of his children and heirs; and then showing what ought to be the study and work of those that are justified and regenerate. So that, by this full and dexterous restitution of Christ's doctrine, his kingdom was so fully explained to the people that no relics of the old leaven could remain long in any parts of our ceremonies or discipline." He and other foreign divines strongly urged Cranmer to proceed onwards in the work of reformation. Melancthon, in particular, departing from the course he too often pursued, recommended the use of the plainest terms on controverted subjects, such as could not be misunderstood.

The act of the six articles, which prevented all discussion upon subjects connected with religion, was now repealed by the interference of Cranmer. Also the act against Lollards, with every act by which men could be made to suffer for any religious opinion which was not considered as opposed to the christian faith. By the provisions of an act restraining persons from treating the sacrament of the altar with levity or contempt, the laity were restored to communion in both kinds.

The visitation throughout the kingdom was now completed. Many abuses had been corrected, numerous relics of superstition were removed from the churches, and the reading of the English bible was encouraged. Gardiner's opposition to the latter measure was one of the causes of his imprisonment. This proceeding of the council, however, made that busy, meddling prelate to be accounted the champion of his party, and exhibited him as a sufferer for religion. He was liberated after a few months' confinement, when the proceedings which he so warmly opposed had received the sanction of parliament. He returned to Winchester, but his conduct there induced the council to send for him again to London, and to require his residence in the metropolis; shortly after he was again committed to prison.

In the early part of 1548, the communion book was compiled by several prelates and divines who had been appointed for this purpose. The particulars of their discussions are given by Burnet, and are interesting, as they exhibit to us Cranmer's mind freed from those errors upon the subject of the Lord's supper by which it had been so long enthralled. The following account is given by Strype. "Ridley, reading Bertram's book of the body and blood of Christ, was sharpened to examine more accurately the old opinions of the presence of Christ's flesh and blood; and looking into ecclesiastical authors he found it greatly controverted in the ninth century, and learnedly written against, which made him begin to conclude it none of

the ancient doctrines of the church, but more lately brought into it. These his thoughts he communicated to archbishop Cranmer, which was about the year 1546; whereupon they both set to examine it with more than ordinary care, and all the arguments that Cranmer gathered about it he digested into his book. Nor was the good archbishop ashamed to make a public acknowledgment in print of this as well as of his other popish errors, in his answer to Dr. Smith, who, it seems, had charged him with inconstancy." The reply to Smith is as follows:—

"He understood not my book of the catechism, and therefore reporteth untruly of me, that I in that book did set forth the real presence of Christ's body in the sacrament. Unto which false report I have answered in my fourth book, the eighth chapter.* But this I confess of myself, that not long before I wrote the said catechism I was in that error of the real presence, as I was many years past in divers other errors, as of transubstantiation, of the sacrifice propitiatory of the priests in the mass, of pilgrimages, purgatory, pardons, and many other superstitions and errors that came from Rome, being brought up from youth in them, and nousled therein for lack of good instruction from my youth, the outrageous floods of papistical errors at that time overflowing the world. For the which, and other mine offences in youth, I do daily pray unto God for mercy and pardon, saying, Good Lord, remember not mine ignorances and offences of my youth.

"But after it had pleased God to show unto me by his holy word a more perfect knowledge of his Son Jesus Christ, from time to time as I grew in knowledge of him, by little and little, I put away my former ignorance. And as God of his mercy gave me light, so through his grace I opened mine eyes to receive it, and did not wilfully repugn unto God and remain in darkness. And I trust in God's mercy and pardon for my former errors, because I erred but of frailness and ignorance. And now I may say of myself as St. Paul said, When I was like a babe or child in the knowledge of Christ, I spake like a child and understood like a child. But now that I am come to man's estate, and growing in Christ through his grace and mercy, I have put away that childishness." (p. 402, 3.)†

This subject now occupied much of the public attention. Peter Martyr having lectured against transubstantiation at Oxford,

* Cranmer here refers to his own work on the sacrament.

† In the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, among the Parker MSS., is "a thin note book" of Cranmer's concerning the sacrament, which Strype conjectures to be "his meditations and conclusions when he set himself accurately to examine the sacramental controversy, and fell off from the opinion of the carnal presence." Strype also considers that Cranmer was the means of bringing Peter Martyr to the clearer views of this subject, which that reformer afterwards stated in his defence of the ancient and apostolical doctrine.

was interrupted by the papists, who conducted themselves in a very disorderly manner. The council then directed that a regular disputation should be held, in which proper order should be observed. This was accordingly done. At Cambridge similar public discussions took place. They were summed up by Ridley, who was then more fully master of that subject than any other English divine. The particulars of these disputations are given by Fox. The substance of Martyr's discourse was published both in Latin and English.

His own diocese received early attention from Cranmer, particularly the city of Canterbury, which had been kept in much darkness by the Romish ecclesiastics who combined so actively against the archbishop during the last reign. He now appointed six preachers to officiate in that city, all of whom were protestants. Their labours were blessed in the conversion of many, as appears by the number of martyrs who in the following reign suffered there the torment of fire for their profession of the gospel. One of these preachers was Becon, a laborious divine, whose writings were very useful in promoting the truth, and are among the most valuable remains of the British reformers, though scarcely known at the present day. The new service-book was brought into public use in the autumn of this year, 1548. It was grounded upon the liturgies of the primitive church, divested of most of the Romish additions, and retaining the phraseology of scripture. Of the language used in this work we may observe, that it was compiled before the pedantic phraseology, which became general some years afterwards, had affected the simplicity of the English tongue, and if we compare the translations of ancient prayers contained therein, with modern renderings, we shall be impressed with the value of the reformers' writings, when considered only in that point of view. Considerable progress now had been made in removing the errors of popery, but the representation contained in a letter of Paget to the protector, written in the following year, as given by Strype, was but too true. "The use of the old religion is forbidden by a law, and the use of the new is not yet printed in the stomachs of eleven out of twelve parts of the realm; what countenance soever men make outwardly to please them in whom they see the power resteth." Many of the clergy who were attached in their hearts to popery, read the English liturgy and the homilies, so as to make them unintelligible to the people.

Cranmer had to contend with many ecclesiastics of this description; but he proceeded with his accustomed mildness and forbearance. An instance of this appears in his conduct towards the vicar of Stepney, who formerly had been abbot of Tower-hill. That unworthy pastor would commonly disturb the protestant lecturers in his church, in the midst of their sermons, if he liked not their doctrine, by causing the bells to be rung or "beginning to sing with the choir before the sermon

was half done; and sometimes by challenging the preacher in the pulpit; for he was a strong, stout, popish prelate." At length Underhill, one of the gentleman pensioners, a person of good family and well respected, came to reside in the parish. Finding that the vicar persisted in his opposition to the law, he took him to the archbishop at Croydon, and stated the particulars of his conduct. Cranmer dismissed him with a gentle rebuke, bidding him to do so no more. Underhill remonstrated at this lenity, as encouraging the opposers of the truth, adding, "If it ever come to their turn they will show you no such favour." "Well," said Cranmer, "if God so provide, we must abide it." As Strype relates, "his opinion was, that clemency and goodness, as they were more agreeable to the gospel which he laboured to adorn, so they were more likely to obtain the ends he proposed than rigour and austerity."

The ambitious and unprincipled conduct of the lord admiral, Seymour, brother to the protector, led to his attainder in 1549. The unpopularity of the duke of Somerset was increased by his proceedings against so near a relative, and other circumstances. The papists eagerly promoted these discontents among the people, who were further agitated by the opinions diffused among them by some of the fanatics active in the recent popular disturbances in Germany, who had fled to this country. Their opinions were considered dangerous to the christian religion, as well as to the good order of the state, and a commission was issued to Cranmer and thirty-one other persons, to inquire respecting these seditious fanatics, and all who opposed the truth. Several persons were brought before the commissioners, and prevailed upon to recant, but their comprehensive powers caused individuals to be included whose opinions were rather fantastic than dangerous. One of them, named Joan Bocher, had adopted some views respecting the nature of Christ which were inconsistent with the truths of the christian religion, although not upon the points of most vital importance; she accordingly fell under the provisions of the barbarous laws which had been enacted by the papists, and which still continued in force with respect to similar cases. Cranmer, therefore, while sitting as judge, had to pronounce sentence of condemnation against her; the rulers however were unwilling to follow the example of the church of Rome; and both Cranmer and Ridley exerted themselves to induce her to forsake the opinions she had embraced. She was kept in prison for twelve months, but as she refused to retract her opinions, the barbarous laws then in force required her life, and on the 27th of April, 1551, the council resolved that she should be burned. It is stated by Fox that the king being unwilling to direct the execution of this sentence, the council prevailed upon Cranmer to urge him to sign the warrant, which the youthful monarch very unwillingly did, casting the responsibility upon the archbishop; the persecuted female accordingly was committed to the flames.

It is not intended to represent Cranmer as a faultless character, and certainly his part in this affair cannot be defended or excused. We ought however to remember that his conduct rather proceeded from his education, the principles of the times in which he lived, and the official station he filled, than from a sanguinary natural disposition. So deep had men in general drank of the persecuting spirit of Romanism, that Cranmer in this respect erred with Melancthon and every leading protestant, with the exception of Luther. It should also be remembered that Bocher and Von Parr would have been burned by the Romanists, while their sentence would have been more promptly carried into execution, and their treatment more harsh. The eagerness with which the Romanists urged many slanders against the reformation also tended much to produce this painful tragedy, by rendering the protestants anxious to show that in departing from the Romish faith, they were not actuated by atheistical indifference, as their enemies asserted. It was in this view that they falsely thought it their duty to put to death those whom they considered to be blasphemers of the christian religion, while in no instance did they proceed to extremities against the Romanists. In justice to the unhappy victim of intolerance, Joan Bocher, it should be stated that she was a friend of Anne Askew who suffered for the truth in the preceding reign; she herself had been active in circulating the English scriptures, at the hazard of her life. The opinions for which she suffered were erroneous views respecting the nature of Christ,—her errors were speculative rather than practical, and although her conduct cannot be defended in every respect, yet she ought by no means to be accounted as one of the violent fanatics of Munster.*

In 1549 Bonner was removed from the see of London, and soon after Gardiner from that of Winchester. Much forbearance and lenity were shown towards these men, whose conduct in every respect was the reverse of obedient subjects. The proceedings against Bonner and Gardiner fully show that they suffered, not for their religion, but for political malpractices.

* Strype remarks that Fox, contrary to his usual plan in matters of importance, has not given his authority for the conversation said to have passed between the monarch and the primate. Nor has Saunders, the earliest and most abusive calumniator of the British reformation, alluded to it, though he has particularly related other circumstances connected with this tragedy. The Rev. H. Soames observes, "Of the part which Cranmer really took in the affair of Joan Bocher we are ignorant, except that he presided judicially at her trial, and that he endeavoured in company with Ridley to shake her opinions in several subsequent interviews. His dislike to the shedding of blood must be inferred from the mildness of his disposition, and is rendered undeniable by known facts." Strype also remarks, that although king Edward VI. notices her condemnation and execution in his own diary, he makes no mention of this conversation with Cranmer. From the records of the council it appears that Cranmer was not present when her execution was resolved on, which would lead us to conclude that he had no eager desire for her death.

Gardiner especially promoted the decision against himself; he knew that his life was not endangered, and he had no objection to be exhibited as suffering for his principles. Though Bonner offered no resistance to the measures of reformation, he suffered the greatest disorder to prevail in his diocese, and took care not to enforce the observance of any wholesome regulations.*

In 1550, bishop Hooper was appointed to the see of Gloucester. Some serious discussions ensued with Cranmer and Ridley relative to the episcopal habits. Upon the particulars of these differences we need not dwell, but may notice with much pleasure, the brotherly love which these once contending parties manifested towards each other, when fellow-sufferers in the days of Mary. In fairness to Cranmer it should be said, that he was apprehensive of consequences to himself if he did not enforce what the law then demanded.† Had the English reformation been carried further, these unhappy differences would have been prevented.

At this time several parts of England were agitated by insurrections, and much discontent prevailed amongst the lower classes. The causes are principally to be found in the changes which had taken place in the general state of society during the preceding half century, unconnected with religion. These changes in many instances bore very heavily upon the lower ranks, and had supplied subjects for reproof equally to sir Thomas More, Tindal, and Latimer, before the reformation commenced. The monks and bigoted Romanists increased the popular discontent. The Romish priesthood encouraged superstitious feelings, and the first proceeding of the misguided populace was to demand the restoration of the mass, with all its trumpery, attendant superstitions, and persecutions. These insurrections became very formidable, especially in the west of England and in Norfolk; they were suppressed with considerable difficulty and bloodshed. There are many references to them in the writings of the reformers. From the concurrent testimony of contemporary writers it is evident that plunder and revolution were the main objects which the leaders had in view, while the particular circumstances in which the lower classes were then placed forwarded their designs. The parts of England best cultivated were thickly peopled, and the landlords, anxious to keep pace with the luxuries and improvements of the age, sought to make their estates more productive by measures which too often were oppressive. The superfluous labourers were in many cases driven from their natural homes, to make room for increased flocks of sheep, on account of the

* After the death of queen Mary, some letters from the popish bishops were found amongst her papers, which showed their intrigues during her brother's reign.

† Strype says, "Neither was Cranmer any other ways instrumental to Hooper's imprisonment, than by doing that which was expected from him, namely, giving a true account of his unsuccessful dealing with him." The letters of Bucer, Alasco, and Hooper on this subject will be found in Strype's Memorials.

great demand for wool, while the state of manufactures and commerce did not find them employment in the cities. Mr. Soames correctly observes, that "unprincipled plunderers, political incendiaries, and gloomy bigots, eagerly laid hold of the discontents necessarily springing from these causes, and by persuading the miserable peasantry that their distresses arose from the abolition of their accustomed superstitions, inflamed their passions so far as to lead them into open rebellion." As a general remark it may be observed, that in the market towns and places of trade the people mostly favoured the reformation, while in the "upland towns" and more secluded agricultural districts ignorance and superstition still prevailed.*

Cranmer preached a sermon on this occasion, the particulars of which are given by Burnet. It is a faithful, plain, practical discourse, reproving the vices of the times, and exhorting to repentance and change of life. He also wrote a reply to the demands of the rebels in the west of England, who not only required the restoration of popery in its grossest forms of error, but that the act of six articles should be again enacted. One specimen of their demands will suffice to show the influence by which these poor people were misled. "4. We will have the sacrament hang over the high altar, and there to be worshipped as it was wont to be; and they which will not thereto consent, *we will have them die like heretics against the holy catholic faith.*" Cranmer's reply to the rebels fully exposes the errors of popery; it is printed at length by Strype, but is rather fitted for an historical collection than the present. The doctrines of the gospel were plainly stated, as the following extract relative to purgatory will show. "What can be more foolish than to say that pains can wash sins out of the soul? I do not deny but that corrections and punishments in this life are a calling of men to repentance and amendment, and so to be purged by the blood of Christ. But correction without repentance can nothing avail, and they that are dead are past the time of repentance, and so no correction or torments in purgatory can avail them. And what a contumely and injury is this to Christ, to affirm that all have not full and perfect purgation by his blood who die in his faith! Is not all our trust in the blood of Christ, that we be cleansed, purged, and washed thereby? And will you have us now to forsake our faith in Christ, and bring us to the pope's purgatory to be washed therein, thinking that Christ's blood is an imperfect lie or soap that washes not clean? If he shall die without

* The duke of Somerset, writing to sir Philip Hoby, then ambassador at the imperial court, says, "The causes and pretences of their uproars and risings are divers and uncertain: some cry, pluck down enclosures and parks; some for their commons; others pretend religion; a number would rule and direct things as gentlemen have done; and indeed all have conceived a wonderful hate against gentlemen, and take them all as their enemies. The ruffians among them, and soldiers cashiered, which be the chief doers, look for spoil."

mercy that treads Christ's blood under his feet, what is treading of his blood under our feet if this be not? But if, according to the catholic faith which the holy scripture teaches, and the prophets, apostles, and martyrs confirmed with their blood, all the faithful that die in the Lord be pardoned of their offences by Christ, and their sins be clearly spunged and washed away by his blood, shall they after be cast into another strong and grievous prison of purgatory, then to be punished again for that which was pardoned before? Christ himself saith, He that believeth in Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come to judgment, but shall pass from death unto life. And is God no truer to his promises, but to punish that which he promiseth to pardon?" Surely this is not the language of a supple, timid, interested courtier, such as Cranmer is represented by some, nor would commonplace feelings have caused these statements of gospel truth to be advanced prominently in a state manifesto.

The year 1550 is also rendered memorable by the publication of Cranmer's "Defence of the true and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ." Strype relates that by this work many were brought to embrace the sound doctrine concerning the sacrament. The subject was further discussed by Gardiner, in his book, entitled "A Confutation of Cranmer," and in the reply of the latter to the sophistical cavillations of his opponent. When the Romanists came again to power they would not allow the protestants to resort to the press, or publicly and freely to discuss respecting truth and error. "Turn or burn" was the conclusive argument they employed.

In 1552, the articles of religion were set forth by authority. The different reformed churches on the continent had for some time possessed formularies which could be referred to as authentic statements of their doctrines. The importance of such declarations, in controversies with the Romanists, was deeply felt. From the commencement of this reign, Cranmer had desired that a general assembly of delegates from the protestant countries should assemble in England, by whom a statement of this nature, suitable for protestants in general, might be prepared. For this purpose he corresponded with Melancthon and Calvin, who cordially approved the design. Various circumstances prevented the plan from being carried into effect, and the disadvantages resulting from the want of such a document were now too obvious to allow of longer delay. The articles accordingly were prepared. Cranmer may be considered as the author or compiler of them, having avowed himself as such when called to judgment before the Romish commissioners; but he doubtless availed himself of the assistance of Ridley and others. They vary in some respects from those now called the thirty-nine articles, but not upon any essential point. They were partly drawn from the German

confessions of faith; particularly that of Augsburg, and the Saxon confession prepared in 1551, to be presented to the council of Trent.*

The histories of Edward VI. relate the political intrigues which disturbed the latter part of his reign. The fall and execution of Somerset, and the ambitious projects of Northumberland, which led to the usurpation and death of lady Jane Grey, need not be here detailed. There can be no doubt that Somerset erred in many respects, but he deserved not to suffer as a criminal. His conduct during his last hours was that of one who felt himself a sinner, and rejoiced that a ground of confidence was set before him in the death and sufferings of Christ. On the scaffold he expressed himself to this effect, adding, "As to one thing, dearly beloved friends, I feel no cause for repentance. While in authority, I constantly and diligently set forth and furthered the christian religion to the utmost of my power." He farther said, "I most heartily beseech you all, that this religion, now so purely set forth among you, may be accepted and embraced by you, with becoming thankfulness; producing that effect upon your lives which must flow from it, if you would escape the wrath of God;" concluding his address, "I desire you all to bear me witness that I die here in the faith of Jesus Christ, desiring you to help me with your prayers that I may persevere constant in the same unto my life's end." His last words were, "Lord Jesus, save me." A painful feeling of horror was publicly manifested at the execution of this excellent nobleman.

Cranmer was deeply grieved by the fall and death of Somerset. He saw that the principal outward support of the reformation was gone. Somerset promoted the good work upon principle; Northumberland only from political objects. Cranmer and others had repeatedly to remonstrate with the latter on the open profaneness and vices of his followers. During the deliberations respecting the fate of Somerset, the primate boldly stood forward in his defence, and a letter which he wrote to the nobles who engaged in the proceedings against the protector, caused them for a time to hesitate in their course.

Cranmer also displeased Northumberland by openly opposing a bill of attainder against Tonstall, bishop of Durham, the most moderate of the Romish prelates. Though he had opposed the reformation, yet it was evident that extreme proceedings were urged against him, rather that Northumberland might profit from the spoils of his richly-endowed see, than from the charges of treason being justly founded. Cranmer was unsupported excepting by one peer; even the Romish bishops did not interfere in behalf of their brother; but eventually the attainder for treason was laid aside, and Tonstall was only deprived of his bishopric.

Although Northumberland could not weaken Edward's

* Heylyn has printed the articles of Edward and Elizabeth, so as to exhibit all the variations between them.

affection for Cranmer, he succeeded in directing the measures of government as best suited his own interests—even those which related to matters of religion. The advice and opinions of the archbishop were no longer influential. Cranmer now lived comparatively in seclusion, where he mourned over the dark prospect presented by the declining health of Edward. Among other attacks upon him the old accusations of avarice and heaping up of treasure were revived. Cecil in friendship informed him of this. Cranmer replied, "As for your admonition, I take it most thankfully, as I have ever been most glad to be admonished by my friends, accounting no man so foolish as he that will not hear friendly admonishments. But as for the saying of St. Paul, They that will be rich fall into many temptations—I fear it not half so much as I do stark beggary. For I took not half so much care for my living when I was a scholar at Cambridge, as I do at this present. For although I have now much more revenue, yet I have much more to do withal; and have more care to live now as an archbishop than I had at that time to live like a scholar. I have not so much as I had ten years ago, by 150*l.* of certain rent, besides casualties. I pay double for every thing that I buy. If a good auditor have this account he shall find no great surplusage to wax rich upon. And if I knew any bishop that were covetous, I would surely admonish him, but I know none, but all beggars, except it be one; and yet I dare well say he is not very rich.* If you know any, I beseech you to advertise me, for peradventure I may advertise him better than you. To be short, I am not so doted to set my mind upon things here, which I neither can carry away with me, nor tarry long with them." Cranmer was reduced to "stark beggary" at last. During his imprisonment at Oxford he had not a penny in his purse, and his enemies refused to allow well-disposed persons to bestow an alms upon him; a privilege granted to common beggars, and the vilest criminals!

Among the correspondence of Cranmer is a letter which shows the correct view he had taken as to the most effectual way of imparting spiritual instruction to the people of Ireland. It will be interesting to those who, two centuries and a half later, have been led to adopt the plan recommended by the reformer. Writing of Dr. Turner, who was appointed to the archbishopric of Armagh, he says, "He preached twice in the camp that was by Canterbury; for which the rebels would

* Cranmer here refers to Holgate, archbishop of York, who in several respects was a very objectionable character, though he favoured the reformation. He was more wealthy than Cranmer supposed, as appears from the inventory of property taken from him on the accession of queen Mary. He then possessed in ready money twelve hundred pounds, besides plate, jewels, and other effects. to a large amount, all of which were seized for the use of the queen! Holgate was imprisoned for some time, but was released at the intercession of king Philip. He died in 1555, of an illness caused by grief and the treatment he had received.

have hanged him; and he then seemed more glad to go to hanging, than he doth now to go to Armagh, he alleges so many excuses. But the chief is this, that he shall preach to the walls and stalls, for the people understand no English. I bear him in hand, yes; and yet I doubt whether they speak English in the diocese of Armagh. But if they do not, then, I say, that if he will take the pains to learn the Irish tongue, which with diligence he may in a year or two, then both his person and doctrine shall be more acceptable, not only unto his diocese, but also throughout all Ireland!"

At this time Cranmer was unwell in body, as well as in mind; he suffered from a severe attack of ague, which probably was aggravated by anxiety and mental uneasiness; but he lamented the personal suffering which proceeded from his illness, less than the hinderance thereby occasioned to the good designs he was desirous to carry forward.* He expressed himself to this effect in a letter to Cecil; his mind, however, was somewhat tranquillized by the pacification in Germany, whereby the free exercise of the protestant faith was secured to a country in whose welfare he had long felt deeply interested. For many years Cranmer had corresponded, at least monthly, with the German reformers, and had assisted many of his poorer brethen there, with regular allowances, to such an extent as at times excited dissatisfaction amongst his own attendants. Many interesting particulars relative to this correspondence might be collected for a regular biographical account of Cranmer. Amongst other exertions in their behalf, he obtained a yearly allowance for Sleidan, to enable him to continue his history of the reformation.

One of Cranmer's occupations at this period, was the revisal of the Book of Common Prayer. It was used publicly for the first time at St. Paul's on All Saints' Day, 1552, on which occasion the clergy present laid aside the greater part of the Romish vestments, the use of which had been so strongly objected to by Hooper and many of the most estimable reformers.

Cranmer's attendance at the privy council appears to have ceased on the 8th of June, 1553; probably from his dislike to the measures respecting the succession then pressed forward by Northumberland. Nor was he satisfied merely to withdraw. He reasoned with the king at considerable length against the design of setting aside his sister Mary from the throne, and requested a private audience that he might urge his reasons still more fully. The party then in power prevented this. Northumberland told him that it became him not to speak to the king as he had done.

When the legal instrument for settling the crown upon lady Jane Grey was completed, Cranmer was called upon to add his signature, which he refused to do, alleging his oath

* Among them was a plan for the better and more equally providing for the ministers of religion.

to the late king.* The example of others being urged, he replied, "I am not judge over any man's conscience but my own only." At length the importunity of the dying monarch, with the assurance of the highest legal authorities of the land, prevailed upon Cranmer to sign. This instrument for altering the succession is dated June 21. Soon after, on the 6th of July, 1553, Edward departed in peace from a world which was not worthy of him.

Numerous passages in the writings of the reformers show how general was the feeling that the sins of the nation, with the disregard of the mercies vouchsafed, had brought down this sore judgment upon the land.

PART III.

Cranmer in the Reign of Queen Mary.

During the brief pageant of queen Jane, Cranmer acted conformably to the engagement into which he had entered, but without any bitterness towards the rightful monarch, to whom he early declared his submission. He had reason to expect Mary's displeasure for the part he had taken in her mother's divorce; but he had still stronger claims upon her forbearance, having successfully interfered in her behalf, when her father, Henry VIII., ordered that she should be sent to the Tower, and dealt with as any other subject, upon her refusal to declare her acquiescence in his assumption of the supremacy. On that occasion the king warned Cranmer that he would repent of his interference.

Soon after the queen's arrival in London, it was reported that Cranmer had endeavoured to gain her favour, by promising to take a part in the funeral solemnities for her brother, according to the Romish ceremonial. Some indeed reported that he had already said mass at Canterbury; this originated in Dr. Thornton's having performed that service. Cranmer was anxious to stop the false rumour, and prepared a writing to clear himself. Scory, then bishop of Rochester, saw this paper in the archbishop's chamber, and requested a copy. Others speedily were taken, and were so much sought for, that almost every scrivener's shop was employed in making copies.

* That Cranmer was no party to these proceedings clearly appears from his letters to queen Mary, printed by Coverdale, in which he relates the part he took in opposing the measures for altering the succession. He denies any participation with Northumberland, and says, "The duke never opened his mouth to me, to move me to any such matter. Nor was his heart such towards me, he seeking long time my destruction, that he would ever trust me in such a matter, or think that I would be persuaded by him."

Meanwhile Cranmer expected what would befall him, and directed his steward to discharge all the debts owing by him without delay. On learning this had been done, he expressed much satisfaction that honest men would not be sufferers by him.

Fox states, Dr. Cranmer, at a day fixed, appeared before the queen's commissioners, bringing a true inventory, as he was commanded, of all his goods. That done, bishop Heath, one of the commissioners, said, "My lord, there is a bill put forth in your name, wherein you seem to be aggrieved with the setting up the mass again; we doubt not but you are sorry that it is gone abroad." The archbishop answered again, saying: "As I do not deny myself to be the very author of that bill or letter, so must I confess here unto you, concerning the same bill, that I am sorry that the said bill went from me in such sort as it did. For when I had written it, master Scory got the copy of me, and it is now come abroad, and, as I understand, the city is full of it. For which I am sorry, that it so passed my hands; for I had intended otherwise to have made it in a more large and ample manner, and minded to have set it on Paul's church door, and on the doors of all the churches in London, with mine own seal joined thereto." When they saw his constancy, they dismissed him, affirming that he should hear further. Bishop Heath declared afterwards to Dr. Cranmer's friends, that, notwithstanding his attainder of treason, the queen's determination at that time was, that Cranmer should only have been deprived of his archbishopric, and have had a sufficient living assigned him, upon his exhibiting a true inventory, with command to keep his house without meddling in matters of religion. Not long after this, he was sent unto the Tower,* and soon after condemned for treason. Notwithstanding, the queen, when she could not honestly deny him his pardon, as all the rest were discharged, and especially seeing he last of all others subscribed to king Edward's request, and that against his own will, released to him his action of treason, and accused him only of heresy. This the archbishop liked right well, and it came to pass as he wished; because the cause was not now his own, but Christ's; not the queen's, but the church's.

At length it was determined by the queen and the council, that he should be removed from the Tower to Oxford, there to dispute with the doctors and divines. And although the queen and the bishops had concluded what should become of him,

* The Tower being very full of prisoners, Cranmer was confined for some time in the same room with Ridley, Latimer, and Bradford. This afforded them an opportunity mutually to support and strengthen each other; it is referred to in the letters of these martyrs. The letter which he addressed to the queen when condemned for treason, is in the present collection. According to the words of the apostle he was desirous not to suffer "as an evil doer." So many, who were far more guilty than Cranmer, had been pardoned and preferred to the queen's favour, that she could not refuse him the same.

yet it pleased them that the matter should be debated with arguments, that under some honest show of disputation, the murder of the man might be covered.

The manner in which these disputations were conducted is described by Cranmer, in a letter which he sent to the council. He says, "Dr. Chadsey was appointed to dispute against me, but the disputation was so confused, that I never knew the like, every man bringing forth what him liked, without order; and such haste was made, that no answer could be suffered to be taken fully to any argument before another brought a new argument. And when we had answered them, they would not appoint one day to bring forth our proofs, that they might answer us.—But why they would not answer us, what other cause can there be, but that either they feared their matter, that they were not able to answer us; or else for some consideration they made such haste, not to seek the truth, but to condemn us, that it must be done in post haste before the matters could be thoroughly heard; for in all haste we were all three condemned of heresy." During these disputations, Dr. Weston, one of the chief arguers of the papists, attempted by a false quotation from scripture, to prove that women ought not to receive the sacrament!

After the disputations in Oxford, sentence condemnatory immediately was pronounced against Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, by Dr. Weston and others of the university; whereby they were judged to be heretics, and committed to Bocardo, the common gaol in Oxford. Some interesting letters of the martyrs were addressed to Cranmer and his companions while in that prison.

As yet the authority of the pope was not re-established, and the sentence against these reformers could not be enforced by any law then existing. New proceedings were instituted in the following year, and on the 12th of September, 1555, Cranmer was brought before Dr. Brooks, bishop of Gloucester, the pope's sub-delegate, who sat in state in St. Mary's church with Dr. Martin and Dr. Story, as commissioners on the part of king Philip and queen Mary, and as Fox adds, "underneath them other doctors, scribes and pharisees also, with the pope's collector, and a rabblement of such other like."

Cranmer bowed with respect to the royal commissioners, but refused any similar mark of reverence to the pope's delegate.

Bishop Brooks then proceeded to charge Cranmer with heresy, treason, and adultery; the latter epithet being always applied by the Romanists to the marriage of the protestant clergy. Cranmer made a firm reply, concluding thus, "I cast fear apart; for Christ said to his apostles, that in the latter days they should suffer much sorrow, and be put to death for his name's sake. Fear them not, saith he, but fear Him, which when he hath killed the body, hath power to cast the soul into fire everlasting. Also Christ saith; He that will live shall die, and he that loseth his life for my name's sake, he shall find

it again. Moreover he said, Confess me before men, and be not afraid; if you do so, I will stand with you; if you shrink from me, I will shrink from you. This is a comfortable and a terrible saying, this maketh me to set all fear apart. I say therefore, the bishop of Rome treadeth under foot God's laws and the kings." His defence is valuable, but too long for insertion here.

Cranmer then declared how the pope's supremacy had been renounced, saying, "The truth is, my predecessor, archbishop Warham, gave the supremacy to king Henry VIII., and said that he ought to have it before the bishop of Rome, and that God's word would bear him. And upon the same was there sent to both the universities, Oxford and Cambridge, to know what the word of God would do touching the supremacy, and it was reasoned upon, and argued at length. So at the last both the universities agreed, and set to their seals, and sent it to king Henry VIII., to the court, that he ought to be supreme head and not the pope. You (bishop Brooks) were then doctor of divinity at that time, and your consent was thereunto, as your hand doth appear. Therefore you misreport me, that I was the cause of your falling away from the pope, but it was yourself. All this was in archbishop Warham's time, and whilst he was alive, so that it was three-quarters of a year after, ere ever I had the bishopric of Canterbury in my hands, and before I might do any thing. So that here ye have reported of me that which ye cannot prove, which is evil done."

Dr. Story then attempted to prove the pope's supremacy. A long desultory conversation followed between the archbishop and Dr. Martin, the substance of which is given by Fox. The articles against Cranmer were exhibited, and his answers taken down. In them is stated, "as for the catechism, and the book of articles, with the other book against Winchester, he granted the same to be his doings."

The judges and commissioners were about to rise and depart: but the bishop of Gloucester thinking it not the best so to dismiss the people, being somewhat stirred with the words of the archbishop, began another oration, in which he told Cranmer that he must not reason with him, being a heretic, and stated arguments in behalf of the pope's supremacy, and the real presence in the sacrament. Dr. Story added some remarks; Cranmer replied, but was rudely ordered "to hold his peace."

Several witnesses were then called, and their depositions being taken, Dr. Story admonished the archbishop, permitting him to make his exceptions, if he thought any of the said witnesses should be refused: who then would admit none of them all, being men perjured, and not in christian religion. For if to swear, said he, against the pope were unlawful, they should rather have given their lives, than their oath. But if it were lawful, then are they perjured, to defend him whom they forsware before. This answer being lightly regarded, he was commanded to the place from whence he came.

Among other things they objected to him that he was married, which he confessed. Whereupon Dr. Martin said, that his children were bondmen to the see of Canterbury. At which saying the archbishop smiled, and asked him if a priest at his benefice kept a concubine, and had by her bastards, whether they were bondmen to the benefice or no, saying, I trust you will make my children's cases no worse.

After they had received his answers to all their objections, they cited him to appear at Rome within fourscore days, to make there his personal answer. He wrote to the queen, that if she would send him, he would be content to go.

Cranmer was now remanded to prison, and the mockery of citing him at Rome was proceeded in, while he was detained a close prisoner in England, and his beloved brethren Ridley and Latimer were committed to the flames. On the 4th of December, he was declared to be contumacious, that is, wilfully absent, and sentenced to be put to death.

Bonner, and Thirlby, bishop of Ely, who had formerly been much favoured by Cranmer, arrived at Oxford on the 14th February, 1556, with full authority to deprive and condemn the venerable primate. The remainder of this narrative will be given chiefly in the words of Fox. While the pope's commission was in reading, the archbishop said, "What lies are these, that I, being continually in prison, and never suffered to have counsel or advocate at home, should produce, witness, and appoint my counsel at Rome? God must needs punish this open and shameless lying." They read on the commission which came from the pope, with fulness of power to supply all manner of defects in law or process, and giving them full authority to proceed to the deprivation and degradation of him, and so upon excommunication to deliver him up to the secular power, no appeal being allowed.

When the commission was read, they clothed him; putting on him a surplice, and then an alb; after that the vestment of a sub-deacon, and every other furniture, as a priest ready to mass. When they had apparelled him so far: What, said he, I think I shall say mass. Yea, said Cosins, one of Bonner's chaplains, my lord, I trust to see you say mass, for all this. Do you so, quoth he, that shall you never see, nor will I ever do it.

Then they invested him in all manner of robes of a bishop and archbishop, as he is at his installing, saving that as every thing then is most rich and costly, so every thing in this was of canvass and old clouts, with a mitre and a pall of the same put upon him in mockery, and the crosier staff was put in his hand.

Bonner then went on, lying and railing against the archbishop, till at length there was never a man but was weary of the unmannerly usage of him in that time and place; insomuch that the bishop of Ely divers times pulled Bonner by the sleeve to make an end, and said to him afterward when they went to dinner, that he had broken promise with him; for he had entreated him earnestly to use the archbishop with reverence.

After all this done and finished, they began then to bustle toward his degrading; and first to take from him his crosier staff out of his hands, which he held fast, and refused to deliver, and withal imitating the example of Martin Luther, pulled an appeal out of his left sleeve under the wrist, which he there and then delivered unto them, saying, I appeal to the next general council; and herein I have comprehended my cause and form of it, which I desire may be admitted.

This appeal being put up to the bishop of Ely, he said: My lord, our commission is to proceed against you, every appeal being put aside, and therefore we cannot admit it.

Why, quoth he, then you do me the more wrong, for my case is not as every private man's case. The matter is between the pope and me immediately, and none otherwise; and I think no man ought to be a judge in his own cause.

Well, quoth Ely, if it may be admitted, it shall, and so received it of him. And then began he to persuade earnestly with the archbishop to consider his state, and to weigh it well, while there was time to do him good, promising to become a suitor to the king and queen for him; and so protested his great love and friendship that had been between them, heartily weeping, so that for a time he could not go on with his tale. Then proceeded they to his degradation.

To be short, when they came to take off his pall, which is a solemn vesture of an archbishop, then said he: Which of you hath a pall, to take off my pall?* Whereunto one of them said, in that they were but bishops, they were his inferiors, and not competent judges; but being the pope's delegates, they might take his pall, and so they did, and so proceeding took every thing in order from him, as it was put on. Then a barber clipped his hair round about, and the bishops scraped the tops of his fingers where he had been anointed, wherein bishop Bonner behaved himself as roughly and unmannerly, as the other bishop was to him soft and gentle. Whilst they were thus doing, All this, quoth the archbishop, needed not: I had myself done with this gear long ago. Last of all they stripped him out of his gown into his jacket, and put upon him a poor yeoman beadle's gown, full bare and nearly worn, and as evil made as one might see, and a townsman's cap on his head, and so delivered him to the secular power.

Then spake lord Bonner, saying to him: Now are you no lord any more; and so whensoever he spake to the people of him, as he was continually barking against him, ever he used this term—This gentleman here, &c.

And thus with great compassion and pity of every man, in this evil-favoured gown was he carried to prison, There

* A long narrow piece of woollen cloth worn over the shoulders. The palls were made from the wool of lambs, consecrated at Rome every year with great ceremony, and were sent by the pope to every archbishop upon his election, for which he had to pay a large sum of money.

followed a gentleman of Gloucestershire with the archbishop's own gown, who standing by, and being thought to be attending one of the bishops, had it delivered to him; who by the way talking with him, Cranmer said, The bishop of Ely protested his friendship with tears; yet he might have used a great deal more friendship towards me, and never have been the worse thought on, for I have well deserved it. This gentleman going into the prison with him, asked him if he would drink. Who answered him, saying, if he had a piece of salt fish, that he had better will to eat; for he had been that day somewhat troubled with this matter, and had eaten little, but now that it is past, my heart, said he, is well quieted. Whereupon the gentleman said, he would give him money with all his heart, for he was able to do it. But he being skilled in the law, and fearing master Farmer's case,* durst therefore give him nothing, but gave money to the bailiffs that stood by, and said, that if they were good men, they would bestow it on him, for my lord of Canterbury had not one penny in his purse to help him, and so left him, my lord bidding him earnestly farewell, commending himself to his prayers and all his friends. That night this gentleman was staid by Bonner and Ely, for giving him this money; and but for the help of friends, he had been sent up to the council. Such was the cruelty and iniquity of the time, that men could not do good without punishment.

The doctors and divines of Oxford now busied themselves about Cranmer, to have him recant, assaying by all crafty practices and allurements they might devise, how to bring their purpose to pass. And to the intent they might win him easily, they had him to the dean's house of Christ's church in the said university, where he lacked no delicate fare, played at bowls, had his pleasure for walking, and all other things that might bring him from Christ. Over and besides all this, secretly and craftily they suborned certain men, who, when they could not prevail against him by arguments and disputation, should by entreaty and fair promises, or any other means, allure him to recantation; perceiving otherwise what a great wound they should receive, if the archbishop had stood steadfast in his sentence; and again on the other side, how great profit they should get, if he, as the principal standard bearer, should be overthrown. By reason whereof the wily papists flocked about him, with threatening, flattering, entreating, and promising, and all other means; especially Henry Sydall, and the Spaniard, friar John de Villa Garcina, also Dr. Cole and others.

The papists thus used every inducement to persuade Cranmer to make some assent to their doctrines. At length they overcame his fortitude, and Cranmer fell! He consented to affix his signature to a formulary of recantation.

It might be supposed, that it was done for the hope of life,

* This Farmer had lost all his lands, for relieving a priest in the Tower in king Henry's time.

and better days to come. But as we may since perceive by a letter of his sent to a lawyer, the most cause why he desired his time to be delayed, was that he would make an end of Marcus Antoninus, which he had already begun; but howsoever it was, plain it was, to be against his conscience.*

This recantation of the archbishop was not so soon conceived, but the doctors and prelates without delay caused the same to be imprinted and set abroad in all men's hands.† All this while Cranmer was in no certain assurance of his life, although the same was faithfully promised to him by the doctors. The queen having now gotten a time to revenge her old grief, received his recantation very gladly; but of her purpose to put him to death, she would nothing relent.

Now was Cranmer's cause in a miserable taking, who neither inwardly had any quietness in his own conscience, nor yet outwardly any help in his adversaries. Besides this, on the one side was praise, on the other side scorn, on both sides danger, so that neither could he die honestly, nor yet live unhonestly. And whereas he sought profit, he fell into double disprofit, that neither with good men he could avoid secret shame, nor yet with evil men the note of dissimulation.

Dr. Cole, having his lesson, returned to Oxford ready to play his part, who, as the day of execution drew near, even the day before, came into the prison to Cranmer, to try whether he abode in the catholic faith, wherein before he had left him. To whom when Cranmer had answered, that by God's grace, he would daily be more confirmed in the catholic faith; Cole departing for that time, the next day following repaired to the archbishop again, giving no signification as yet of his death, that was prepared. In the morning, the 21st day of March, appointed for Cranmer's execution, Cole, coming to him, asked if he had any money? To whom, when he answered, that he had none, he delivered fifteen crowns to give to the poor, to whom he would: and exhorting him so much as he could to constancy in faith, departed thence about his business.

The archbishop now began to surmise what they went about, and thinking that the time was at hand, in which he could no longer dissemble the profession of his faith with Christ's people, he put secretly in his bosom his prayer with his exhortation, which he minded to recite to the people, before he should make the last profession of his faith, fearing lest, if they had heard the confession of his faith, they would not afterwards suffer him to exhort the people.

About nine of the clock, the lord Williams, sir Thomas Brydges, sir John Brown, and the other justices, with other noblemen of the queen's council, came to Oxford with a great

* His answer to Gardiner on the sacrament. Knox bears a strong testimony to the ability with which Cranmer exposed the errors of popery on this head.—*See Admonition, Knox*, p. 112.

† For further particulars respecting his recantation, see note, p. 72.

train of waiting-men. Also of the other multitude on every side, as are wont in such a matter, was made a great concourse and greater expectation. Briefly, as every man's will inclined, either to this part or to that, so according to the diversity of their desires, every man wished and hoped for.

In this so great frequency and expectation, Cranmer at length cometh from the prison Bocardo, unto St. Mary's church, in this order; the mayor went before, next him the aldermen in their place and degree. After them was Cranmer brought between two friars, who mumbling to and fro certain psalms in the streets, answered one to another until they came to the church door, and there they began the song of Simeon, Nunc dimittis, and entering into the church, the psalm-saying friars brought him to his standing, on a stage over against the pulpit.

The lamentable case and sight of that man gave a sorrowful spectacle to all christian eyes that beheld him. He that late was archbishop, metropolitan, and primate of England, and the king's privy counsellor, being now in a bare and ragged gown, and ill-favouredly clothed, with an old square cap, exposed to the contempt of all men, did admonish men not only of his own calamity, but to consider of their state and fortune.

In this habit, when he had stood a good space upon the stage, turning to a pillar near adjoining thereunto, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and prayed to God once or twice; till at the length Dr. Cole coming into the pulpit, divided his whole sermon into three parts, according to the solemn custom of the schools, intending to speak first, of the mercy of God; secondly, of his justice to be showed; and, last of all, how the prince's secrets are not to be opened.

It were too long to repeat all things, that in long order were then pronounced. The sum of this tripartite declamation was, that although pardon and reconciliation were due according to the canons, seeing he repented from his errors; yet there were causes, why the queen and the council at this time judged him to death; of which, lest he should marvel too much, he should hear some.

"He glorified God much in his conversion, because it appeared to be only his work, declaring what travail and conference had been with him to convert him, and all prevailed not, till it pleased God of his mercy to reclaim him, and call him home. In discoursing of which place, he much commended Cranmer, and qualified his former doings, thus tempering his judgment and talk of him, that all the time he flowed in riches and honour, he was unworthy of his life; and now that he might not live, he was unworthy of death. But lest he should carry with him no comfort, he would diligently labour, he said, and also he did promise in the name of all the priests, that were present, that immediately after his death, there should be dirges, masses, and funerals, executed for him in all the churches of Oxford for the succour of his soul.

" Cranmer, in all the mean time, with what great grief of mind he stood hearing this sermon, the outward show of his body and countenance did better express, than any man can declare; one while lifting up his hands and eyes unto heaven, and then again for shame letting them down to the earth. A man might have seen the very image and shape of perfect sorrow lively in him expressed. More than twenty several times the tears gushed out abundantly, and dropped down marvellously from his fatherly face. They, which were present, do testify, that they never saw in any child more tears, than burst out from him at that time, all the sermon while; but especially when he recited his prayer before the people. It is marvellous what commiseration and pity moved all men's hearts, who beheld so heavy a countenance and such abundance of tears, in an old man of so reverend dignity.

" Cole, after he had ended his sermon, called back the people that were ready to depart, to prayers: ' Brethren,' said he, 'lest any man should doubt of this man's earnest conversion and repentance, you shall hear him speak before you, and therefore, I pray you, master Cranmer, that you will now perform what you promised not long ago, namely, that you would openly express the true and undoubted profession of your faith, that you may take away all suspicion from men, and that all men may understand that you are a catholic indeed.'—' I will do it,' said the archbishop, ' and with a good will:' rising up, and putting off his cap, he began to speak thus unto the people.

" ' I desire you, well-beloved brethren in the Lord, that you will pray to God for me, to forgive my sins, which above all men, both in number and greatness, I have committed; but, among all the rest, there is one offence, which of all at this time doth vex and trouble me, whereof in process of my talk you shall hear more in its proper place;' and then, putting his hand into his bosom, he drew forth his prayer, which he recited to the people.

" And here kneeling down, he said: ' O Father of heaven: O Son of God, Redeemer of the world: O Holy Ghost, three persons and one God, have mercy upon me, most wretched caitiff and miserable sinner. I have offended both against heaven and earth more than my tongue can express. Whither then may I go, or whither should I fly? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and in earth I find no place of refuge or succour. To thee, therefore, O Lord, do I run; to thee do I humble myself, saying, O Lord, my God, my sins are great, but yet have mercy upon me for thy great mercy. The great mystery that God became man, was not wrought for little or few offences. Thou didst not give thy Son, O heavenly Father, unto death for small sins only, but for all the greatest sins of the world, so that the sinner return unto thee with his whole heart, as I do here at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O God, whose property is always to have

mercy: have mercy on me, O Lord, for thy great mercy. I crave nothing, O Lord, for mine own merits, but for thy name sake, that it may be hallowed thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake; and now therefore, Our Father of heaven, hallowed be thy name,' &c. And then he, rising, said:

" 'Every man, good people, desireth at the time of his death to give some good exhortation, that others may remember the same before their death, and be the better thereby; so I beseech God grant me grace, that I may say something at this my departing, whereby God may be glorified, and you edified. First, it is a heavy case to see that so many folk so much dote upon the love of this false world, and are so careful for it, that of the love of God, or the world to come, they seem to care very little or nothing. Therefore this shall be my first exhortation, that you set not your minds overmuch upon this flattering world, but upon God and upon the world to come; and learn to know what this lesson meaneth, which St. John teaches, that the love of this world is hatred against God.

" 'The second exhortation is, that next under God you obey your king and queen willingly and gladly, without murmuring or grudging; not for fear of them only, but much more for the fear of God; knowing, that they are God's ministers, appointed by God to rule and govern you; and therefore, whosoever resisteth them, resisteth the ordinance of God.

" 'The third exhortation is, that you love altogether like brethren and sisters. For, alas! pity it is to see what contention and hatred one christian man beareth to another, not taking each other as brother and sister, but rather as strangers and mortal enemies. But, I pray you, learn and bear well away this one lesson, to do good unto all men, as much as in you lieth; and to hurt no man, no more than you would hurt your own natural loving brother or sister. For this you may be sure of, that whosoever hateth any person, and goeth about maliciously to hinder or hurt him, surely and without all doubt, God is not with that man, although he think himself in God's favour.

" 'The fourth exhortation shall be to them that have great substance and riches of this world, that they will well consider and weigh three sayings of the scriptures. One is of our Saviour Christ himself, who saith: It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. A sore saying, and yet spoken of him that knoweth the truth. The second is of St. John, whose saying is this: He that hath the substance of this world, and seeth his brother in necessity, and shutteth up his mercy from him, how can he say that he loveth God? The third thing is of St. James, who speaketh to the covetous rich men after this manner: Weep you and howl for the misery that shall come upon you: your riches do rot, your clothes be moth-eaten, your gold and silver doth canker and rust, and their rust shall bear witness against you, and consume you like fire. You gather a hoard or treasure of God's indignation against the last

day.—Let them that are rich ponder well these three sentences; for if ever they had occasion to show their charity, they have it now, the poor people being so many, and victuals so dear.*

"'And now, forasmuch as I am come to the last end of my life, whereupon hangeth all my life past, and all my life to come, either to live with my master, Christ, for ever in joy, or else to be in pain for ever with wicked devils in hell, and I see before mine eyes presently, either heaven ready to receive me, or else hell ready to swallow me up; I shall therefore declare unto you my very faith how I believe, without any colour or dissimulation; for now it is no time to dissemble, whatsoever I have said or written in time past.

"'First, I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, &c. And I believe every article of the catholic faith, every word and sentence taught by our Saviour Jesus Christ, his apostles and prophets, in the new and old testament.

"'And now I come to the great thing that so much troubleth my conscience, more than any thing that ever I did or said in my whole life; and that is, the setting abroad of a writing contrary to the truth: which now here I renounce and refuse, as things written with my hand, contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and which were written for fear of death, and to save my life, if it might be; and that is, all such bills and papers, which I have written or signed with my hand since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore; for may I come to the fire, it shall first be burned. And as for the pope, I refuse him, as Christ's enemy and antichrist, with all his false doctrine. And as for the sacrament, I believe as I have taught in my book against the bishop of Winchester, the which, my book, teacheth so true a doctrine of the sacrament, that it shall stand at the last day before the judgment of God, where the papistical doctrine contrary thereto, shall be ashamed to show her face.'

"Here the standers-by were all astonished, marvelled, were amazed, and looked one upon another. Some began to admonish him of his recantation, and to accuse him of falsehood.

"Briefly, it was a world to see the doctors beguiled of so great a hope. I think there was never cruelty more notably or better in time deluded and deceived. For it is not to be doubted, but they looked for a glorious victory and a perpetual triumph by this man's recantation. Who, as soon as they heard these things, began to let down their ears, to rage, fret, and fume; and so much the more, because they could not revenge their grief; for they could now no longer threaten or hurt him. For the most miserable man in the world can die but once; and whereas of necessity he must needs die that day, though the papists had been ever so well pleased; now being ever so

* A great scarcity then prevailed, a pound of beef was sold for fourpence, equal to five shillings of our present money.

much offended with him, yet could he not be twice killed of them. And so, when they could do nothing else unto him, they ceased not to object unto him his falsehood and dissimulation.

"Unto which accusation he answered: 'Ah, my masters, do not you take it so. Always since I lived hitherto, I have been a hater of falsehood, and a lover of simplicity, and never before this time have I dissembled:' and in saying this, all the tears, that remained in his body, appeared in his eyes. And when he began to speak more of the sacrament, and of the papacy, some of them began to cry out; and especially Cole cried out: 'Stop the heretic's mouth, and take him away.'

"And then Cranmer, being pulled down from the stage, was led to the fire, accompanied with those friars, vexing, troubling, and threatening him most cruelly. To whom he answered nothing, but directed all his talk to the people, saving that one, troubling him in the way, he spake and exhorted him to get him home to his study, and apply diligently; saying, that if he diligently called uponGod,by reading more, he should get knowledge.

"But when he came to the place where the holy bishops and martyrs of God, Hugh Latimer and Ridley, were burnt before him for the confession of the truth; kneeling down, he prayed to God, and not tarrying in his prayers, putting off his garments to his shirt, he prepared himself to death. His shirt was made long down to his feet. His feet were bare. Likewise his head, when both his caps were off, was so bare, that not one hair could be seen upon it. His beard was long and thick, covering his face with marvellous gravity. Such a countenance moved the hearts, both of friends and enemies.

"Then the Spanish friars began to exhort him, and play their parts afresh, but with vain and lost labour. Cranmer, with steadfast purpose abiding in the profession of his doctrine, gave his hand to certain old men, and others that stood by, bidding them farewell.

"Then was an iron chain tied about Cranmer, whom, when they perceived to be more steadfast than that he could be moved from his sentence, they commanded the fire to be set unto him. And when the wood was kindled, and the fire began to burn near him, stretching out his arm, he put his right hand into the flame; which he held so steadfast and immovable, saving that once with the same hand he wiped his face, that all men might see his hand burned, before his body was touched. His body did so abide the burning of the flame, with such constancy and steadfastness, that standing always in one place without moving of his body, he seemed to move no more than the stake to which he was bound. His eyes were lifted up unto heaven, and oftentimes he repeated, 'This hand hath offended; Oh! this unworthy right hand,' so long as his voice would suffer him: and using often the words of St. Stephen, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' in the greatness of the flame he gave up the ghost.

"This fortitude of mind, when friar John saw, thinking it came not of fortitude but of desperation, he ran to the lord Williams, crying, that the archbishop was vexed in mind, and died in great desperation. But he, aware of the archbishop's constancy, smiled, and, by silence, rebuked the friar's folly.

"And this was the end of the learned archbishop, whom, lest by evil subscribing he should have perished, by well recanting God preserved; and lest he should have lived longer with shame and reproof, it pleased God rather to take him away, to the glory of his name and the profit of the church."*

The principal writings of Cranmer have been already mentioned. Strype has given a list of several minor pieces, which for the most part have reference to the subjects principally agitated in those times. Many letters written by him, also some volumes of the numerous passages or common-places collected during the course of his extensive reading, have also been preserved. These manuscripts are chiefly to be found in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and among the Cotton manuscripts in the British Museum; there are some in the palace at Lambeth. Few of them possess much interest for the reader of the present day, excepting as historical documents; as such they are valuable, and many of them have been printed by Burnet and Strype. Cranmer's correspondence with the German reformers doubtless contained much valuable matter, and if carefully sought for in the libraries on the continent, some precious remains might probably be recovered. Cranmer also wrote a part of the book of Homilies. There is no doubt of his being the author of the homily of Salvation. Dr. Wordsworth conjectures that those of the misery of all mankind, of true and lively faith, and of good works, also proceeded from his pen. It is hardly necessary to add, that all his writings were prohibited during the reign of Mary, as heretical.

Cranmer's anxiety to promote the reformation in England was also shown by his kind reception and entertainment of several learned foreigners, some of whom he induced to settle in England, and others he received when exiles for religion. Among the former was Martin Bucer, who had been most active in promoting the reformation in Germany, and who was highly esteemed for his moderation and piety. While these excellent men were under his roof, Cranmer employed them in various ways connected with the furtherance of the truth. When the Interim was enforced in Germany, in 1549, there were in Cranmer's house at one time, Bucer, Alasco, Martyr, Fagius, Alexander, Ochinus, the younger Jonas, and others, several of whom were soon after settled in the English universities. Bucer

* All the main circumstances of this narrative of Cranmer's end, are given in the narrative of a Romanist who was present. His account is printed in Strype's Memorials of Cranmer, from a MS. now in the Harleian collection.

was nominated public professor of divinity, and Fagius of the Hebrew, at Cambridge, but they died after a short residence there. In the reign of queen Mary, their remains were publicly burned. By Cranmer's particular direction, their lectures were to illustrate and interpret the scripture. Martyr was settled at Oxford, where he engaged in a public disputation with the Romanists respecting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Martyr continued in England till the commencement of queen Mary's reign, when he retired to the continent. His wife having died during their abode at Oxford, the papists, in the reign of Mary, took up her body and buried it in a dunghill. Both Bucer and Martyr were employed by Cranmer in the revision of the book of common prayer. Alasco settled at London as pastor of the Dutch congregation, to whom the church of the Augustine monastery in Throgmorton-street was granted for their place of worship. An Italian church was also settled at London, and at Glastonbury one composed of refugees from Strasburg. This care of foreigners, and allowing them to use their own rites and ceremonies unmolested, shows considerable progress towards correct views of toleration. Latimer also resided at Lambeth very often during this reign—and other names might be mentioned, proving that Cranmer did not restrict his bounty to foreigners alone.

Cranmer's second wife survived him, and also some of his children, but Strype was unable to ascertain the number of his family or any particulars concerning them worthy of notice; a son and a daughter were alive after the accession of Elizabeth. Among his chaplains were Dr. Taylor the martyr, Ponet, and Becon.

This account of archbishop Cranmer cannot be concluded better than in the words of Dr. Laurence:—

"Cranmer's fate has been peculiarly hard. Living in evil days, and exposed after his death to the malice of evil tongues, he has suffered in almost every part of his reputation. Papists have impeached the sincerity, while protestants have doubted the steadiness of his principles; and a too general idea seems to prevail that his opinions were for ever fluctuating, or at least so flexible as to have rendered him little better than a weak instrument in the hands of those who possessed more talent and more consistency. But the fact was far otherwise. He was in truth the chief promoter and the ablest advocate of the reformation; planning it with the discretion of a prudent, and the zeal of a good man, and carrying it on towards perfection with a firmness, a wisdom, and a liberality, which obtained him no less credit for the endowments of his head, than the impressions of his heart."

CRANMER'S RECANTATIONS.

In addition to the recantation given by Fox, six others were signed by, or attributed to, Cranmer; they are printed by Strype in his Memorials, from Bonner's publication. These documents have of late been examined with considerable attention, particularly by the Rev. H. Soames, who, after stating the seductive arts employed by the papists to allure Cranmer from the faith, observes, "precisely to what extent his weakness reached, is a point involved in much obscurity. Both parties being disappointed, the particulars of his fall have not been detailed by his contemporaries of either party, with that fulness, clearness, and consistency which is desirable in a matter of such importance." Mr. Soames then examines the subject with great care. The result appears to be, that two of these papers, scarcely capable of receiving a Romish colouring, were written by Cranmer before his degradation and final sentence. The first was merely this, "Forasmuch as [the king and queen's majesties, by consent of their parliament, have received the pope's authority within this realm; I am content to submit myself to their laws therein, and to take the pope for the chief head of this church of England, so far as God's laws, and the laws and customs of this realm will permit. Thomas Cranmer." The latter clause reduces this paper to be nothing in effect; however, it was disingenuous, and when Cranmer had once entered upon this course, though we are told that he wished to retract, he found himself too far entangled. The paper was sent up to court, and considered unsatisfactory. a second less equivocal but still somewhat evasive was prepared. The third expressed submission to the royal ordinances in more unqualified terms; we are told that it was shown to Bonner and Thirlby during their stay at Oxford, but being also considered insufficient, a fourth was drawn up by Bonner. This might pass for a recantation among uninformed persons, but is merely a declaration of Cranmer's readiness to be guided by "the catholic church," in his religious belief, without giving any sanction to the innovations of the church of Rome. The fourth paper appears to have the most satisfactory marks of being genuine of any in the set; it is dated February 16, 1555; the three former are without date. Several circumstances render it probable, that the first three papers had been objected to by the archbishop, and that Bonner worded the fourth in an artful manner, so that it would deceive ignorant persons, while its contents would not be likely to be rejected by Cranmer.

On the 24th of February, a writ was issued, directing the civil authorities of Oxford to burn Cranmer as a heretic. This intelligence must have affected the archbishop considerably, and while in that state of mind, the paper printed by Fox probably was prepared by the friars and others who beset him. It is an unequivocal assent to popery—but he does not appear to have subscribed it; his name was added by others, and his assent witnessed, not by any persons of rank or note, though many must have been at hand, but by a Spanish friar, and by Sydall, an obscure, bigoted, private member of the university. This was printed immediately, but directly after (on March 13th) it was suppressed by

order of the council. Probably not having been formally signed by Cranmer, the papists might apprehend that if it were circulated, it would be disavowed, and perhaps destroy their expectation of at last drawing him into a full renunciation of his principles. Without declaring his assent, he perhaps might have copied it, and have said he would give the contents full consideration. The sixth and last paper bears strong evidence of being drawn up by cardinal Pole ;—it is rather a lengthy self-accusation, than a renunciation of doctrinal opinions, and the absence of statements of that nature, is a strong evidence that all attempts to induce Cranmer to assent implicitly to the Romish faith, had failed. Another trial was made, and from the narrative of his last hours, we find that on the morning of his execution, the Spanish friar brought a seventh paper to Cranmer, who, still hoping for life, seemingly assented, and transcribed two copies, but instead of stating his assent, openly declared the contrary.

All these papers were published immediately after Cranmer had been burned, under the title of "all the submissions and recantations of Thomas Cranmer," and with the authorization of Bonner—a confirmation more likely to induce suspicion than to remove it. He did not hesitate to print the seventh paper, as if it had been read and assented to by Cranmer in St. Mary's church, though in fact he had refused to do so, and had made the impressive declaration and prayer already given.

Such is the complicated history of Cranmer's recantations. It is probable that while he firmly refused to deny the doctrines of truth, he was desirous to induce his adversaries to suppose him more inclined to adopt their views than he really was, hoping thus to escape the fate prepared for him. May we not herein trace somewhat of that casuistry in which Cranmer had unhappily been educated. This crooked policy of one so eminent in the cause of reformation is deeply to be regretted, and cannot be excused. Perhaps it may be even more lamented than if Cranmer had, in an unguarded moment, been induced to subscribe more unequivocally to the views of his enemies ; yet it shows that the truth was firmly rooted in him, and is one additional proof that Cranmer's religion was not that of a political time-server. Except in the view that he had sought to disguise and conceal an adherence to the protestant faith, it is difficult to account for the conduct of the Romanists in issuing a writ for burning him as a heretic. Two of their earliest historians of the reformation expressly state that Cranmer was burned, "his hypocrisy having been detected." Nor are his words at the stake inconsistent with the belief that he rather repented having induced his enemies to believe him ready to assent to their views, than that he had actually done so. Here then we must leave this painful and complicated subject, rejoicing however that this servant of God, who had sinned with Peter, was enabled like him to repent—and boldly at the last to bear witness to the truths he had taught, so that although the protestant may regret, the papist cannot exult in the last days of Cranmer.

A PROLOGUE

OR

PREFACE TO THE BIBLE.*

For two sundry sorts of people, it seems very necessary that something be said in the entry of this book, by the way of preface or prologue; whereby hereafter it may be both the better accepted of those who hitherto could not well bear it, and also the better used of those who heretofore have misused it. For truly some there are that are too slow, and need the spur; some others seem too quick and need more of the bridle; some lose their game by short shooting, some by over shooting; some walk too much on the left hand, some too much on the right.

In the former sort are all they that refuse to read, or to hear read, the scripture in the vulgar tongue; much worse they that hinder or discourage the others from the reading or hearing thereof. In the latter sort are those who, by their inordinate reading, indiscreet speaking, contentious disputing, or otherwise by their licentious living, slander and hinder the word of God most of all others, whereof they would seem to be greatest furtherers.

These two sorts, albeit they are the most unlike the one to the other, yet they both deserve in effect the like reproach: neither can I well tell which of them I may judge the more an offender—him that doth obstinately refuse so godly and goodly knowledge: or him that so ungodly and ungoodly doth abuse the same. And, as touching the former, I would marvel much that any man should be so mad, as to refuse in darkness, light; in hunger, food; in cold, fire. For the word of God is light; Thy word is a lantern unto my feet. It is food; Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word of God. It is fire; I am come to send fire on the earth, and what is my desire, but that it be kindled?

I would marvel, I say, at this, save that I consider how much custom and usage may do. So that if there

* This prologue or preface to the bible appears to have been written by Cranmer, and was prefixed to the edition of the bible printed by the royal authority and under his direction, in 1539. It was often reprinted with later editions.

were a people, as some write of the Cimmerians, who never saw the sun, by reason that they are situated far toward the north pole, and are enclosed and overshadowed by high mountains: it is credible and like enough, that if by the power and will of God, the mountains should sink down and give place, that the light of the sun might have entrance to them, at the first, some of them would be offended therewith. And the old proverb affirms, that after tillage of corn was first found, many delighted more to feed on mast and acorns wherewith they had been accustomed, than to eat bread made of good corn. Such is the nature of custom, that it causes us to bear all things well and easily, wherewith we have been accustomed, and to be offended with all things thereunto contrary. And therefore I can well think them worthy of pardon, who at the coming abroad of scripture doubted and drew back. But such as persist still in their wilfulness, I must needs judge not only foolish, froward, and obstinate; but also peevish, perverse, and hardened.

And yet, if the matter should be tried by custom, we might also allege custom for the reading of the scripture in the vulgar tongue, and prescribe the more ancient custom. For it is not much above one hundred years ago, since scripture hath not been accustomed to be read in the vulgar tongue within this realm: and many hundred years before that, it was translated and read in the Saxon tongue, which at that time was our mother tongue, whereof there remain yet divers copies, found lately, in old abbeys, of such antique manner of writing and speaking, that few men now are able to read and understand them.* And when this language waxed old and out of common usage, because folk should not lack the fruit of reading, it was again translated into the newer language, whereof yet also many copies remain, and are daily found. But now, to let pass custom, and to weigh, as wise men ever should,

* The earliest English translation of the scriptures now existing was the work of an unknown writer, and is considered by archbishop Usher to have been executed about A. D. 1290. Of this version three ancient manuscript copies exist. About the year 1380, Wickliff translated the entire bible from the Latin Vulgate, several copies of which remain. In the life of Wickliff, prefixed to the selections from his writings full, particulars respecting his translations are given.

An Anglo Saxon version of scripture was made about the close of the tenth century by abbot Ælfric The gospels, psalter, and the eight first books of the old testament have been printed.

the thing in its own nature ; let us here discuss what it avails that scripture be had and read of the lay and vulgar people. And to this question I intend here to say nothing, but that was spoken and written by the noble doctor and most moral divine, John Chrysostom, in his third sermon de Lazaro. Albeit I will be something shorter, and gather the matter into fewer words and less room than he there does, because I would not be tedious.

He there exhorts his audience, that every man should read by himself at home in the mean days and time, between sermon and sermon, to the intent they might both more profoundly fix in their minds and memories that which he had said before upon such texts, whereupon he had already preached. And also that they might have their minds the more ready and better prepared to receive and perceive that which he should say from thenceforth in his sermons, upon such texts, as he had not yet declared and preached upon. He saith, "Therefore my common usage is to give you warning before what matter I intend after to treat upon, that you yourselves in the mean days, may take the book in hand, read, weigh, and perceive the sum and effect of the matter, and mark what has been declared, and what remains yet to be declared ; so that thereby your mind may be the more furnished to hear the rest that shall be said. And that which I exhort you I ever have and will exhort you, that you not only here in the church give ear to that which is said by the preacher; but that also when ye be at home in your houses, ye apply yourselves from time to time to the reading of holy scriptures; which also I never cease to beat into the ears of them that are my familiars, and with whom I have private acquaintance and conversation.

"Let no man make excuse and say, I am busied about matters of the commonwealth, I bear this office or that; I am a craftsman, I must apply to mine occupation ; I have a wife, my children must be fed, my household must I provide for ; briefly, I am a man of the world, it is not for me to read the scriptures, that belongs to those who have bidden the world farewell, who live in solitariness, and contemplation, and have been brought up and continually nourished in learning and religion. To this answering, What sayest thou man, is it not for thee to study and to read the scripture, because thou art encumbered and distracted with cares and business? So much the more it

behoves thee to have defence of scriptures, how much thou art the more distressed in worldly dangers.

"They that are free and far from trouble and intermeddling of worldly things, live in safeguard and tranquillity, and in the calm, or within a sure haven. Thou art in the midst of the sea of worldly wickedness, and therefore thou needest the more of spiritual succour and comfort. They sit far from the strokes of battle, and far out of gunshot, and therefore they are but seldom wounded. Thou that standest in the fore front of the host, and nighest to thine enemies, must needs take now and then many strokes, and be grievously wounded, and therefore thou hast most need to have thy remedies and medicines at hand. Thy wife provokes thee to anger, thy child gives thee occasion to take sorrow and pensiveness, thine enemies lie in wait for thee, thy friend, as thou takest him to be, sometimes envies thee, thy neighbour misreports thee, or picks quarrels against thee, thy mate or partner undermines thee, thy lord, judge, or justice, threatens thee, poverty is painful unto thee, the loss of thy dear and well-beloved causes thee to mourn, prosperity exalts thee, adversity brings thee low. Briefly, so divers and so manifold occasions of cares, tribulations, and temptations, beset thee and besiege thee round about. Where canst thou have armour or fortress against thine assaults? Where canst thou have salve for thy sores, but of holy scripture?

"Thy flesh must needs be prone and subject to fleshly lusts, who daily walkest and art conversant among women, who seest their beauties set forth to the eye, hearest their nice and wanton words, smellest their balm, civet, and musk, with many other like provocations and stirrings; except thou hast in readiness wherewith to suppress and avoid them, which cannot elsewhere be had, but only out of the holy scriptures. Let us read and seek all remedies that we can, and all shall be little enough. How shall we then do, if we suffer and take daily wounds, and when we have done, will sit still and search for no medicines? Dost thou not mark and consider how the smith, mason, or carpenter, or any other handy-craftsman, what need soever he be in, what other shift soever he make, he will not sell nor lay to pledge the tools of his occupation; for then how should he work his trade, or get his living thereby?

" Of like mind and affection ought we to be towards holy scripture. For as mallets, hammers, saws, chisels, axes, and hatchets, are the tools of their occupation; so the books of the prophets, and apostles, and all holy writ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, are the instruments of our salvation. Wherefore let us not stick to buy and provide us the bible, that is to say, the books of holy scripture, and let us think that to be a better jewel in our house than either gold or silver. For like as thieves are loth to assault an house where they know to be good armour and artillery; so wheresoever these holy and spiritual books are occupied, there neither the devil nor any of his angels dare come near. And they that occupy them are in much safeguard, and have great consolation, and are the readier unto all goodness, the slower unto all evil; and if they have done any thing amiss, anon, even by the sight of the books, their consciences are admonished, and they wax sorry and ashamed of the fact.

" Peradventure they will say unto me, How and if we understand not that we read which is contained in the books? What then? Suppose thou understand not the deep and profound mysteries of scripture, yet can it not be but that much fruit and holiness must come and grow unto thee by the reading; for it cannot be that thou shouldest be ignorant in all things alike. For the Holy Ghost hath so ordered and tempered the scriptures, that in them as well publicans, fishers, and shepherds, may find their edification, as great doctors their erudition. For those books were not made for vain glory, as were the writings of the gentile philosophers and rhetoricians; to the intent the makers should be had in admiration for their high style and obscure manner and writing, whereof nothing can be understood without a master or an expositor; but the apostles and prophets wrote their books so that their special intent and purpose might be understood and perceived of every reader, which was nothing but the edification or amendment of the life of them that read or hear it. Who is it that reading, or hearing read, in the gospel, ' Blessed are they that be meek; blessed are they that be merciful; blessed are they that be of clean heart;' and such other like places, can perceive nothing, except he have a master to teach him what it means? Likewise the signs and miracles, with all other histories of the doings of Christ or his apostles, who is there of so simple

wit and capacity, but he may be able to perceive and understand them? These are but excuses and cloaks for the rain, and coverings of their own slothfulness.

But still ye will say, "I cannot understand it.—What marvel? How shouldst thou understand, if thou wilt not read, nor look upon it? Take the books into thine hands, read the whole story, and that which thou understandest keep it well in memory: that which thou understandest not, read it again and again. If thou canst neither way so come by it, counsel with some other that is better learned, go to thy curate and preacher, show thyself to be desirous to know and learn; and I doubt not but God seeing thy diligence and readiness, if no man else teach thee, will himself vouchsafe with his Holy Spirit to illuminate thee, and to open unto thee that which was locked from thee.

"Remember the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, who albeit he was of a wild and barbarous country, and one occupied with worldly cures* and business, yet, riding in his chariot, he was reading the scripture. Now consider, if this man, passing in his journey, was so diligent as to read the scripture; what thinkest thou, is it likely he was wont to do so, sitting at home? Again, he that read albeit he did not understand; what did he then, thinkest thou, after that, when he had learned and gotten understanding? For, that thou mayest well know that he understood not what he read, hearken what Philip saith there unto him; Understandest thou what thou readest? And he, nothing ashamed to confess his ignorance, answered; How should I understand, having nobody to show me the way? Lo, when he lacked one to show him the way, and to expound to him the scriptures, yet did he read: and therefore God the rather provided for him a guide of the way, that taught him to understand it. God perceived his willing and toward mind, and therefore he speedily sent him a teacher. Therefore let no man be negligent about his own health and salvation. Though thou have not Philip always, when thou wouldest; the Holy Ghost, who then moved and stirred up Philip, will be ready and not fail thee, if thou do thy diligence accordingly.

"All these things are written for us, for our edification and amendment, who are born towards the latter end of the world. The reading of the scriptures is a great and strong bulwark or fortress against sin: the ignorance of the

* Duties.

same, is the greater ruin and destruction of them that will not know it. That is what brings in heresy; that it is which causes all corrupt and perverse living: that it is which brings all things out of good order."

Hitherto all that I have said, I have taken and gathered out of the foresaid sermon of this holy doctor, John Chrysostom. Now if I should in like manner bring forth what the selfsame doctor speaks in other places, and what other doctors and writers say concerning the same purpose, I might seem to you to write another bible, rather than to make a preface to the bible. Wherefore in few words to comprehend the largeness and utility of the scripture, how it contains fruitful instruction and erudition for every man, if any thing be necessary to be learned of the holy scripture, we may learn it. If falsehood shall be reproved, thereof we may gather wherewithal. If any thing be to be corrected and amended, if there need any exhortation or consolation, of the scripture we may well learn.

In the scriptures are the fat pastures of the soul, therein is no venomous food, no unwholesome thing; they are the very dainty and pure feeding. He that is ignorant shall find there what he should learn. He that is a perverse sinner, shall there find his damnation to make him to tremble for fear. He that laboureth to serve God, shall find there his glory, and the promises of eternal life, exhorting him more diligently to labour. Herein may princes learn how to govern their subjects; subjects obedience, love, and dread, to their princes. Husbands how they should behave unto their wives, how to educate their children and servants; and the wives, children, and servants, may know their duty to their husbands, parents, and masters. Here may all manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and mean men; unmarried women, wives, widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen, and all manner of persons, of what estate or condition soever they be, may in this book learn all things, what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all others.

Briefly, to the reading of the scripture none can be enemy, but either they are so sick, that they love not to hear of any medicine; or else so ignorant that they

know not scripture to be the most healthful medicine. Therefore as touching this former part, I will here conclude, and take it for a conclusion, sufficiently determined and approved; that it is convenient and good, the scriptures be read of all sorts and kinds of people, and in the vulgar tongue, without further allegations or probations for the same; which shall not be needed, since this one place of John Chrysostom is enough and sufficient to persuade all them that are not frowardly and perversely set in their own wilful opinion. Specially now, that the king's highness, being supreme head, next under Christ, of this church of England, hath approved with his royal assent the setting forth hereof, which only to all true and obedient subjects ought to be a sufficient reason for the allowance of the same, without further delay, reclamation, or resistance, although there were no preface, or other reason herein expressed.

Therefore now to come to the second and latter part of my purpose; there is nothing so good in this world, but it may be abused, and turned from fruitful and wholesome, to hurtful and noisome. What is there above, better than the sun, the moon, and the stars? Yet there were those that took occasion by the great beauty and virtue of them, to dishonour God, and to defile themselves with idolatry, giving the honour of the living God and Creator of all things, to such things as he had created. What is there here beneath, better than fire, water, meats, drinks, metals of gold, silver, iron, and steel? Yet we see daily great harm and much mischief done by every one of these, as well for lack of wisdom and providence of them that suffer evil, as by the malice of them that work the evil. Thus to them that are evil of themselves, every thing sets forward and increases their evil, be it of its own nature a thing ever so good. Like, as contrarily, to them that study and endeavour themselves to goodness, every thing avails them, and profits unto good, be it of its own nature a thing ever so bad. As saint Paul saith, All things do work together for good to such as do love God. Even as out of most venomous worms is made treacle,* the most sovereign medicine for the preservation of man's health in time of danger. Wherefore I would advise you all that come to the reading

* Not what is now commonly known by that name, but a medicine made up of many ingredients, among which was the flesh of vipers.

or hearing of this book, which is the word of God, the most precious jewel and most holy relic that remains upon earth, that you bring with you the fear of God, and that you do it with all due reverence, and use your knowledge thereof, not to vain glory and frivolous disputation, but to the honour of God, increase of virtue, and edification both of yourselves and others.

And to the intent that my words may be the more regarded, I will use in this part the authority of Gregory Nazianzen, as in the other I did of John Chrysostom. It appears, that in his time there were some, as I fear me there be also now at these days a great number, who were idle babblers, and talkers of the scripture, out of season and all good order, and without any increase of virtue, or example of good living; to them he writes all his first book De Theologia. Wherefore I shall briefly gather the whole effect, and recite it here unto you.

"There are some," saith he, "whose ears and tongues not only, but also their fists are whetted and ready bent all to contention and unprofitable disputation. Whom I would wish, as they are vehement and earnest to reason the matter with tongue, so they were all ready and active to do good deeds. But forasmuch as they, subverting the order of all godliness, have respect only to this thing, how they may bind and loose subtle questions; so that now every market-place, every alehouse and tavern, every feast-house; briefly, every company of men, every assembly of women, is filled with such talk. Since the matter is so, and that our faith and holy religion of Christ begins to wax nothing else, but as it were a sophistry or a talking craft, I can do no less, but say something thereunto. It is not fit," saith he, "for every man to dispute the high questions of divinity, neither is it to be done at all times, neither in every audience must we discuss every doubt; but we must know when, to whom, and how far we ought to enter into such matters.

"First, It is not for every man; but it is for such as are of exact and exquisite judgments, and such as have spent their time before in study and contemplation; and such as before have cleansed themselves, as well in soul as body, or at the least endeavoured themselves to be made clean. For it is dangerous for the unclean to touch that which is most clean, like as the sore eye takes harm by looking upon the sun.

" Secondly, not at all times: but when we are reposed, and at rest from all outward dregs and trouble, and when our heads are not encumbered with other worldly and wandering imaginations; as if a man should mingle balm and dirt together. For he that shall judge and determine such matters and doubts of scriptures, must take his time when he may apply his understanding thereunto, that he may thereby the better see and discern what is truth.

" Thirdly, Where, and in what audience. There and among those that are studious to learn: and not among such as have pleasure to trifle with such matters, as with other things of pastime; which repute for their chief delicates, the disputation of high questions, to show their wits, learning, and eloquence in reasoning of high matters.

" Fourthly, It is to be considered how far to wade in such matters of difficulty. No farther than every man's own capacity will serve him; and again, no farther than the weakness or intelligence of the other audience may bear. For as too great noise hurts the ear; too much meat hurts the man's body; too heavy burdens hurt the bearers of them; too much rain does more hurt than good to the ground; briefly, in all things too much is hurtful; even so, weak wits and weak consciences may soon be oppressed with over-hard questions. I say not this to dissuade men from the knowledge of God, and reading or studying of the scripture: for, I say, that it is as necessary for the life of man's soul, as for the body to breathe. And if it were possible so to live, I would think it good for a man to spend all his life in that, and to do no other thing. I commend the law which bids to meditate and study the scriptures always, both night and day; and sermons and preachings to be made both morning, noon, and eventide; and God to be lauded and blessed in all times, to bedward, from bed, in our journeys, and all our other works.

" I forbid not to read, but I forbid to reason. Neither forbid I to reason, so far as is good and godly: but I allow not that which is done out of season, and out of measure and good order. A man may eat too much of honey be it ever so sweet: and there is a time for every thing, and that which is good, is not good, if it be ungoodly done. Even as a flower in winter is out of season, and as a woman's apparel becomes not a man, neither contrarily, the man's the woman, neither is weeping convenient at a bridal,

neither laughing at a burial. Now if we can observe and keep that which is comely and timely in all other things, shall not we then the rather do the same in the holy scriptures? Let us not run forth, as it were wild horses, that can suffer neither bridle in their mouths, nor sitter on their backs. Let us keep in our bounds, and neither let us go too far on the one side, lest we return into Egypt; neither too far over the other, lest we be carried away to Babylon. Let us not sing the song of our Lord in a strange land; that is to say, let us not dispute the word of God at all adventures, as well where it is not to be reasoned, as where it is: and as well in the ears of them that be not fit therefor, as of them that be. If we can in no wise forbear, but that we must needs dispute, let us forbear thus much at the least, to do it out of time and place convenient. And let us treat of those things which are holy, holily; and upon those things that are mystical, mystically; and not to utter the divine mysteries in ears unworthy to hear them. But let us know what is comely, as well in our silence and talking, as in our garment-wearing, in our feeding, in our gesture, in our goings, in all our other behaviour.

"This contention and debate about scriptures and doubts thereof, especially when such as do pretend to be the favourers and students thereof cannot agree within themselves, does most hurt to ourselves, and to the furthering of the cause and quarrels that we would have furthered above all other things. And we in this are not unlike to them, that, being mad, set their own houses on fire, and that slay their own children, or beat their own parents. I marvel much to recount whereof comes all this desire of vain glory; whereof comes all this tongue-itch, that we have so much delight to talk and clatter?

"And wherein is our communication? Not in the commendation of virtuous and good deeds; of hospitality; of love between christian brother and brother; of love between man and wife; of chastity, and of alms towards the poor; not in psalms and godly songs; not in lamenting for our sins; not in the repressing the affections of the body; not in prayers to God. We talk of scripture, but in the mean time we subdue not our flesh by fasting, watching, and weeping; we make not this life a meditation of death; we do not strive to be lords of our appetites and affections; we go not about to pull down our proud and high minds; to abate our fumish and rancorous

stomachs, to restrain our lusts and bodily delectations; our indiscreet sorrows; our lascivious mirth; our inordinate looking, our insatiable hearing of vanities; our speaking without measure; our inconvenient thoughts, and briefly, to reform our life and manners; but all our holiness consists in talking. And we pardon each other from all good living, so that we may stick fast together in argumentation, as though there were no more ways to heaven but this alone, the way of speculation and knowledge, as they take it; but in very deed it is rather the way of superfluous contention and sophistication."

Hitherto have I recited the mind of Gregory Nazianzen, in that book which I spake of before. The same author saith also in another place, that "The learning of a christian man ought to begin of the fear of God, and to end in matters of high speculation; and not contrarily to begin with speculation, and to end in fear. For speculation, either high cunning or knowledge, if it be not stayed with the bridle of fear to offend God, is dangerous, and enough to tumble a man headlong down the hill. Therefore, saith he, the fear of God must be the first beginning, and as it were an A B C, or an introduction to all them that shall enter into the very true and most fruitful knowledge of holy scriptures. Where the fear of God is, there is the keeping of the commandments; and where the keeping of the commandments is, there is the cleansing of the flesh; which flesh is a cloud before the soul's eye, and suffers it not purely to see the beam of the heavenly light. Where the cleansing of the flesh is, there is the illumination of the Holy Ghost, the end of all our desires, and the very light, whereby the verity of scriptures is seen and perceived."

This is the mind, and almost the words of Gregory Nazianzen, doctor of the Greek church, of whom Jerome saith, that unto his time the Latin church had no writer able to be compared, and to make an even match with him.

Therefore to conclude this latter part, every man that comes to the reading of this holy book, ought to bring with him first and foremost this fear of almighty God; and then next, a firm and stable purpose to reform his ownself according thereunto; and so to continue, proceed, and prosper from time to time, showing himself to be a sober and a fruitful hearer and learner. Which if he do, he shall prove at length well able to teach, though not

with his mouth, yet with his living and good example, which surely is the most lively and effectual form and manner of teaching.

He that otherwise intermeddles with this book, let him be assured that he shall make account therefore when he shall have said to him as is written in the prophet David, Unto the ungodly, said God, Why dost thou preach my laws, and takest my testament in thy mouth? Whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief thou consentedst unto him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou hast let thy mouth speak wickedness, and with thy tongue thou hast set forth deceit. Thou sattest and spakest against thy brother, and hast slandered thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such a one as thyself. But I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done. O consider this ye that forget God, lest I pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you. Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation right will I show the salvation of God. Praise be to God.

ANNOTATIONS

On the Erudition of a Christian Man.

In the life of Cranmer (page 33,) an account is given of "The necessary doctrine and erudition for any christian man," or, as it was usually called, "The king's book," A. D. 1541, which contained erroneous doctrines of the church of Rome. Upon these Cranmer made some annotations, which have been preserved. They are in a manuscript of his own hand-writing, preserved in the library of Corpus Christi college, Cambridge. The three most important passages were first printed by Strype in his appendix to the life of Cranmer, and are entitled three discourses, on Faith, Justification, and Forgiveness of injuries; they are numbered 4, 87, 82 in the following pages. The whole of these annotations, eighty-seven in number, have been printed in the Rev. L. Richmond's Fathers of the English Church; in the present selection only such of them are given as appeared most likely to interest the reader.

4. "As long as I persevere in his precepts and laws, I am one of the right inheritors of his kingdom." This book speaks of the pure christian faith unfeigned, which is without colour, as well in heart, as in mouth. He that hath this faith, converteth* from his sin, repenteth him, that he, like the prodigal son, vainly consumed his will, reason, wit, and other goods, which he received of the mere benefit of his heavenly Father, to his said Father's displeasure; and applies himself wholly to please him again, and trusts assuredly, that for Christ's sake, he will and does remit his sin, withdraws his indignation, delivers him from hell, from the power of the infernal spirits, takes him to his mercy, and makes him his own son and his own heir: and he has also the very christian hope, that after this life he shall reign ever with Christ in his kingdom. For St. Paul saith, If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

This is the very pure christian faith and hope, which every good christian man ought to profess, believe, and trust, and to say of himself, even as Job said, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter

* Turneth.

day upon the earth: and again I shall be in this skin, and in my flesh I shall see God: whom I shall see for myself, and not another. This hope is laid up in my heart.

And as for the other faith, that the good shall arise unto glory, and the evil unto pain; or that those who persevere in God's precepts and laws, so long as they so do, are the right inheritors of his kingdom; this is not the commendation of a christian man's faith, but a most certain proposition, which all the devils believe most certainly, and yet they shall never have their sins forgiven by this faith, nor be inheritors of God's kingdom; because they lack the very christian faith, not trusting to the goodness and mercy of God for their own offences; but they hate God, envy his glory, and are utterly in desperation.

For the more large declaration of the pure christian faith, it is to be considered that there is a general faith, which all that are christened, as well good as evil, have: as to believe that God is, that he is the Maker and Creator of all things, and that Christ is the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, and for his sake all penitent sinners shall have remission of their sins; and that there shall be a general resurrection at the end of this mortal world, at the which Christ shall judge all the good to joy without end, and the evil to pain without end; with such other like things. And all these things even the devils also believe, and tremble, for fear and grievousness of God's indignation and torments, which they endure and ever shall do. But they have not the right christian faith, that their own sins by Christ's redemption are pardoned and forgiven, that themselves by Christ are delivered from God's wrath, and are made his beloved children and heirs of his kingdom to come.

The other faith have all devils and wicked christian people, that are his members; but this pure christian faith have none but those that truly belong to Christ, and are the very members of his body, and endeavour themselves to persevere in his precepts and laws: although many pretend to have the said pure faith, who nevertheless have it not, but only in their mouths. For as there is a love in the mouth, and a love in the heart, even so there is a faith in mouth and a faith in heart. Examine every man, if he trust in God, and love God above all things, and in words, he will answer, yea; but examine every man's acts and deeds, and surely in a great number their acts and deeds

condemn their words. For they walk after their own wills and pleasures, and not after God's commandments. And Christ himself saith, Whoso loveth me, keepeth my commandments: and St. John saith, He that saith he knoweth God, and doth not keep his commandments, is a liar.

And therefore all those that bridle not their own appetites, but follow them, and accomplish the will of their own carnal minds, they trust in God and love God no further than their lips. And if they persuade themselves that they trust in God, and love God in their hearts, and are of any estimation before God, then are they much deceived, and as St. Paul saith, They deceive their own hearts. Our own flesh and carnal mind is contrary to the Spirit and motion of God, and they, saith St. Paul, that belong unto Christ, do crucify their flesh with the affections and lusts thereof. And, contrary, they that follow the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

These are very notable and fearful sentences unto all such as are not repentant, but live after their own wills and not after God's will; neither have the right faith nor love unto God, nor shall be inheritors of his kingdom. And though Christ hath paid a sufficient ransom for all the sins of the world, and is a sufficient Redeemer and Saviour of all the world, yet shall they have no part thereof, for they belong not unto Christ; and Christ utterly refuses them for his who have faith and love only in their mouth, and have not the same engraven in their hearts, and expressed in their acts and deeds.

St. James likens him, that hath this faith only in his mouth, unto a man that pities his naked or hungry brother, and bids him go warm him, or fill his belly; and yet will give him neither clothes nor meat, wherewith he may warm himself or feed his hungriness. What avails this mercy, spoken only with the tongue, when he shows no mercy in deed, in relieving his brother's necessity? But St. James saith, So say, so do; for he shall not receive mercy of God, that speaks mercifully, except he has the same in his heart to do it in deed. For the mercy that is not in the heart, dies even in the mouth, and he shall have judgment without mercy, that shows not mercy in deed, how mercifully soever he speak. And as the body is dead that lacketh a soul, even so is that faith but dead, that is but in the mouth, and does not enter effectually into the heart, and work accordingly.

What love soever the son pretends unto his father, or the servant unto his master; yet surely, all that love is but coloured and feigned, if they are not glad to accomplish the will and commandments of their father or master, and very loth and sorry to transgress any part thereof. Likewise how can the son persuade himself that his father loves him, favours him, and will do all good for him, and at length make him his heir, if he love not his father, nor be sorry to offend his father; but, like an unnatural and disobedient child, is ready to follow his own sensual mind, and to rebel against his father and all his precepts? It is not possible, that such a son should have a sure trust of his father's benignity, gracious goodness, and fatherly love towards him, unless it come either of his ignorance or else the iniquity of his father, so that he either dissemble with his father, and trust that his father knows not of his folly, disobedience, and rebellion; or else that he knows that his father is so evil himself, that he favours ill-doers and delights in the iniquity of his son, and loves him never the worse for his vicious living. But to God, who knoweth all things, even before they are done, and knoweth all men's hearts even to the bottom, better than they do themselves, and who also can favour no iniquity or malice of sin, but hates it and the doer of the same, cannot be ascribed any ignorance or evilness. Therefore, let no man deceive his own mind; for no man surely can have the right faith and sure trust of God's favour towards him, and persuade himself that God is his benign and loving Father, and takes him for his well-beloved son and heir, except he love God in his heart, and have a willing and glad mind, and a delight to do all things that may please God, and a very great repentance and sorrow that ever he did any thing that should offend and displease so loving a Father, whose goodness he can never account.

And, as sure as it is, that God loves and favours them that are thus minded; even, as certain it is, that God hates all those wicked children that love not him, and that are otherwise minded; that follow their own will and rebel against his will. So that all such, what faith or love soever they pretend and say they have towards God, it is but in the lips and words only, and alters not in the heart the whole man from all evil unto all good. Even as the treacle,* kept only in the mouth, doth not remedy poison

* A medicine considered to be a sovereign remedy against poison.

in the whole body; but the treacle must enter down into the body, and then it altereth the whole body, and expels all venom and poison. In like manner, he, whose profession of his faith is only in his mouth, and alters not his evil life, is not forgiven his sins, is not delivered from hell nor from the power of devils, is not made the son of God; but he continues still in the poison of sin, in the wrath and indignation of God and in the damnation of the wicked in hell.

But, if the profession of our faith of the remission of our own sins, enter within us into the deepness of our hearts; then it must needs kindle a warm fire of love in our hearts towards God, and towards all others, for the love of God—a fervent mind to seek and procure God's honour, will, and pleasure in all things,—a good will and mind to help every man, and to do good unto them, so far as our might, wisdom, learning, counsel, health, strength, and all other gifts, which we have received of God, will extend; and, in fine, a firm intent and purpose to do all that is good, and to leave all that is evil. This is the very right, pure, perfect, lively, christian, hearty, and justifying faith, which works by love, as St. Paul saith, and suffers no venom or poison of sin to remain within the heart, God purifying their hearts by faith (Acts xv.); but gendereth in the heart a hatred unto all sin, and makes a sinner entirely a new man. And this is the faith every christian man ought to profess in his creed, and of this faith runneth all our paraphrases upon the same. For, as for the other feigned, pretended, hypocritical, and adulterate faith in the mouth, it is only a painted visor before men; but before God it is hollow within, dead, rotten, and nothing worth.

This being declared, in my judgment it shall not be necessary to interline or insert in many places, where we protest our pure christian faith, these words or sentences, that are newly added, namely, 'I, being in will to follow God's precepts;' 'I, rejecting in my will and heart the devil and his works;' 'I, willing to return to God;' 'If I continue not in sin;' 'If I continue a christian's life;' 'If I follow Christ's precepts;' 'We, living well, if we order and conform our wills in this world to his precepts;' 'If we join our wills to his godly motions;' and such other like sentences, or clauses conditional, which to the right faith need not to be added: for without these conditions

there is no right faith. And these sentences, methinks, come not in aptly in some places, as they are brought in, but rather interrupt and hinder the right course and phrase of the paraphrases, and obscure the same rather than make it clear.

14. "Willing to return to him." It is good to speak of our redemption after the fashion of the scripture, which useth ever to say, that Christ hath spoiled the devils and redeemed the world, without this or any like addition: He, saith the scripture, hath spoiled principalities and powers: and he suffered for our sins, and not for ours only, but also of the whole world. And thus the scripture speaketh, to set forth only the glory of our redemption by Christ. And he that hath the pure faith, is not only willing, but also in deed returneth to Christ. See the fourth annotation above.

15. "By his grace first called, and then by the faith." Calling for God's grace precedeth not faith; but contrary, faith must needs precede our invocation of God, as St. Paul saith, How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed?

19. "If we so die." This condition taketh away the right belief of a faithful man: for the faithful man trusteth surely in God's goodness, that he will give him grace so to die. So that it pertaineth as well to our faith, that we should so die, as that we should be saved. See the fourth annotation above.

27. "And so continuing." Continuance is comprehended in faith[e]; for, if I believe not that I shall continue in the holy catholic church, I cannot believe that I shall have any benefit by Christ.

28. "Following Christ's steps, or when we fall repent our fault." The elect, of whom is here spoken, will follow Christ's precepts, and rise again when they fall; and the right faith cannot be without following of Christ's precepts, and repentance after falling. (See the fourth annotation.) Therefore in my judgment, it were better to say thus; "the elect shall follow Christ's precepts, or when they fall, they shall repent and rise again and obtain remission," &c.

30. "We, living well." The right faith requires good living, but yet our triumph and victory over the devil, hell, and death, standeth not in our well living, but in Jesus Christ; to whom, whensoever we convert in heart and mind, we have the triumph and victory of the devil and

sin, notwithstanding our evil life before. See the fourth annotation.

31. "If we order and conform our will in this world to his precepts." Whether we order our will to his precepts or not, we shall rise from death to life, but not to the glorious life. And yet to the glorious life also we shall rise, though we have not in all things conformed our will to God's will, but have repugned to his will, so that we be repentant and amend, as David, Peter, and Paul did. And the true, faithful man endeavours himself to conform his will to God's will in all things, and to walk right forth in all his precepts. And where by infirmity he chances to take a fall, he lies not still, but by God's help rises again. And his trust is so much in God, that he doubts not in God's goodness towards him, but believes that, if by fragility and weakness he fall again, God will not suffer him so to lie still, but put his hand to him and help him up again, and so at the last he will take him up from death unto the life of glory everlasting.

34. "Applying our will to his motions." Our faith and trust that we are in God's favour and his own children, depends not of our merits and applying of our will to his motions: for, insomuch as many times the good men do the contrary, that were the ready way unto desperation. Therefore if any thing should be here added, it were good, in mine opinion, to say thus; "that we, who are renovated by the same Spirit, and do convert our lives from following our own carnal wills and pleasures, and repenting us that we have followed the same, and now apply our minds to follow the will of that Holy Spirit, are in the favour of God," &c.

38. "Only chiefly." These two words may not be put in this place in any wise: for they signify that our election and justification cometh partly of our merits, though chiefly it cometh of the goodness of God. But certain it is, that our election cometh only and wholly of the benefit and grace of God, for the merits of Christ's passion, and for no part of our merits and good works: as St. Paul disputes and proves at length in the epistle to the Romans and Galatians, and divers other places, saying, If by works, then it is no more of grace: if by grace, then it is no more of works."

73. "Touching the soul." Christ testifies, that all that are elect, shall of God be equally and indifferently

regarded of him in every condition, concerning not only the soul but also the body. So that, considering the state whereunto he hath called them, he provideth meat, drink, and clothing for them, Matt. vi. Yea, and every hair of their head is in reputation* under God, and in his preservation, Matt. x. Luke xii. And although he provide more abundantly for the lords and rich men, than he doth for the subjects and poor folks, yet he no more accepteth and regardeth the rich with their riches, than he doth the poor with their poverty: but every man, as he is joined and affied† to God, so he is accepted and regarded of God, whether he be rich or poor, free or bond.

74. "To our desert." Verily, although we ever deserve as much punishment as is laid upon us, and much more, yet no part of that is afflictive unto us by the will of God; yea, and as touching which, we are so far taken into his favour, that through Christ we are made his children. Though it seem ever so grievous, it is done of his most beneficial and fatherly good will, that he bears towards us, which chasteneth, as St. Paul saith, all those that he loveth. So that of right faith we should believe, that all punishments, tribulations, and persecution, are of the sending of God; notwithstanding that, to our judgment, they shall seem many times and often to come only of the devil, or the wickedness of his ministers.

As when to the holy man Job, the example of all patience, so many mischances happened together,—the Sabeans stole his oxen and asses; the fire, coming from above, burnt up his sheep; the Chaldees drove away his camels; the hurling winds overthrew his son's house, wherewith all his children were slain—who would not have thought, but that all this had come only of the devil, and of thieves and robbers, and that he had been so far out of God's favour, that the devil had then his full power over him? But he, being constant in the faith of God, and knowing certainly that for all this God did bear his favour towards him, wist that all came from him, and that the devil had no power to do any such things, saving that God would even the same. He said not, The devil owed me shame; or, These wicked thieves have wrought me this woe; but referred all to God, and acknowledged, that it was wrought all at his pleasure. Whose example all we, that are the faithful people, should follow, as

* Thought of. † Trusts or puts confidence in.

Augustine testifies, saying, To whomsoever any thing happens, let him say, God gave, God hath taken away. For Job did not say, God gave, the devil hath taken away. Let therefore true love rule in you, lest perchance ye should say, Wo is me, the devil hath done it. Wholly refer thy chastisement to God; for the devil doth nothing, except He, who from above hath power to punish or to chasten, do permit. Psal. xxxi. xxxii.

Likewise, when Shimei did curse king David, and said, Come forth, thou bloodsucker, Baal's man, usurper of another man's kingdom. God hath acquitted thee, and given thy kingdom to Absalom thy son; behold thou art wrapt in mischief, as thou wast desirous of blood-shedding. Who would have thought other, but that this malediction had come to so blessed a prince even from the devil? But this chosen person of God, king David, knowing and believing that God had not withdrawn his favour from him, knew it was much otherwise; and said unto Abishai, who for this calling and cursing of the king would have cut off Shimei's head, Suffer him to curse, for the Lord hath commanded him to curse; and after it follows, Suffer him to curse, according to the precepts of the Lord. It may be that God would thus look upon mine affliction, and give me goodness for the cursing this day. In this it is evident that David denied not the grievous temptation to come of God, at his will and commandment, all for the best, and to the provocation to the greater favour of God, in case, for His sake who sent it, he could suffer it patiently. He ascribes this to the will of God and to his power, without whom Pilate could not have given sentence of condemnation against Christ, as the gospel testifies.

We then should evermore, when any adversity comes, acknowledge God's power, and think it is also of his sending, as Augustine in divers places gives us counsel, saying, on Psal. xxxvi., Whatsoever may befall a righteous man, he ascribes it to the divine will, not the power of the enemy. He may rage and desire to strike, but he cannot strike, if God is unwilling. And in Psal. ciii. As far as the devil hath received power, so far I suffer: but I do not therefore suffer from him, but from Him who hath given the power.

75. It need not to be added, "As only of ourself," for then follows afterwards, "Without a spiritual grace and a singular inspiration of God;" which is all one with this,

" As only of ourself." And if these words be added, to signify that by the common influence of grace given generally, we have inclination to obey the will and precepts of God; so much the Pelagians will grant unto us. And then also it will not agree with that which follows, that without a spiritual grace and singular inspiration, we cannot love God nor man, but in respect to ourselves. And moreover when we have received the spiritual grace and singular inspiration of God, and even the Holy Ghost himself, yet our own carnal inclination is still unto evil, as St. Paul saith, " The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And I delight in the law after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members."

79. " Daily." The scripture would, that those that are the blessed sort* of God, should at all times and at all hours call to remembrance the comfortable words of God. David saith, that he may meditate on the law of God, by day and by night. Like as God also requireth by manifest commandment, where Moses in his behalf said these words, That which now here I command thee, print them in thy heart, tell them to thy children, muse of them sitting in thine house, walking in thy journey, lying down and uprising: clasp them in thy hand for a memorial, make them to stir before thine eyes, and write them in the posts and doors of thine house. (Deut. vi.) This commandment of God requires that at all times and in all places we should be mindful of his words, yea, daily and hourly.

80. " Ought to forgive." Christ taught us herein this petition to pray unto our Father, that he should forgive us, as we ought to forgive others: meaning thereby, that unless we forgive others in deed, our prayer is frustrate and made in vain. And to certify us, that he meant so thereby, immediately after the paternoster, to leave us out of all doubt what he meant by this petition, he saith, If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you your trespasses; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.

81. " Why do we boast us to be christened men?" Why these words should be stricken out I cannot tell, seeing that St. Paul, as concerning our imitation of Christ, even in the same point, speaks the same words in effect;

* People.

saying, Forgive you one another if any of you have a grief against another, as the Lord hath forgiven you, even so do you. (Col. iii.) And as touching that reason, that followeth, which is also stricken out, that is, that we may not think to have forgiveness of God, if we should show extremity to our neighbour, the scripture testifies, that to look for that, it were unreasonable.

82. "And in case that he which hath committed the offence," &c. This remission which is required by Christ, nothing concerns debts that ought to be paid, nor yet goods and lands unjustly withholden, that ought to be restored; but the displeasure and malice of the heart of him that injury is done unto, and an appetite to be revenged of such displeasures as are done unto him. For he, that suffers injury, should be sorry in his heart, that his brother should use himself contrary to the laws and ordinances of God, or of his prince; he should pray for his amendment, and not of his private power render evil for evil, nor take the sword to avenge his own quarrel; but commit the whole punishment of the trespass unto God and to his ministers, whom he hath ordained for that intent.

So doth the scripture command us, saying, Say thou not, I will acquit this evil, but tarry the Lord, and he shall help thee. (Prov. xx.) Likewise St. Paul saith, Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves one of another, but give place unto displeasure: for it is written, Leave the revenging unto me, and I will acquit it, saith the Lord. (Rom. xii.) Where God bids us to reserve the vengeance unto him. It is not meant that the superior powers and their ministers should not meddle therewith, but that we should preserve our hearts clear from all vengeable appetites, and that we should not enterprise any part of God's office and judgment; but commit it unto those who are God's ministers in that behalf, as the prince is, and they that be substituted of him. For as St. Paul saith, (Rom. xiii.) He is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath. So that referring it to them, we refer it even to the judgment of God, which they by his authority do exercise to us. As Jehoshaphat, giving commandment to the judges, said, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord. 2 Chron. xix.

Now these things well considered, these two may stand both well together; that we, as private persons, may

forgive all such as have trespassed against us, with all our heart; and yet that the public ministers of God may see a redress of the same trespass, that we have forgiven. For my forgiveness concerns only mine own person, but I cannot forgive the punishment and correction that by God's ordinance is to be ministered by the superior powers; for insomuch as the same trespass, which I do forgive, may be to the maintenance of vice, not only of the offender, but also of others taking evil example thereby, it lies not in me to forgive the same. For so should I enterprise the office of others, who by the ordinance of God are deputed to the same. Yea, and that such justice may be ministered to the abolishing of vice and sin, I may, yea, and rather, as the cause shall require, I am bound to make relation to the superior powers of the enormities and trespasses done to me and others; and being sorry that I should have cause so to do, seek the reformation of such evil doers, not as desirous of vengeance, but of the amendment of their life. And yet I may not the more cruelly persecute the matter, because the offence is peradventure done towards me, but I ought to handle it as if it were done to any other only, for the use of the extirpation of sin, the maintenance of justice and quietness, which may right well stand with the fervour of charity, as scripture testifies. (Levit. xix. 17.) Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

So that this may stand with charity, and also the forgiveness, that Christ requires of every one of us: for and yet in this doing, I must forgive him with all my heart. Forasmuch as lieth in me, I must be sorry that sin should have so much ruled in him. I must pray to God to give him repentance for his misdeeds, I must desire God, that for Christ's sake he will not impute the sin unto him, being truly repentant, and so to strengthen him in grace, that he fall not again so dangerously. I think I were no true christian man, if I would not thus do. And what other thing is this, than forasmuch as lieth in me, with all my heart, to remit the trespass? But I may by the laws require all that is due unto me by right. And as for the punishment and correction, it is not my part to enterprise therein: but that only belongs to the superior powers, to whom, if the grievousness of the cause shall require by God's commandment, which wills us to take away the

evil from amongst us, we ought to show the offences and complain thereof. For he would not that we should take away the evil, but after a just and lawful means, which is only by the ordinance of God, to show the same to the superior powers, that they may take an order in it, according to God's judgment and justice.

83. "Though our doings be never so good and consonant to equity." He that is justified acknowledgeth humbly his offences and sins, saying, as the publican did, God be merciful to me a sinner. And as David also said, Wash me from mine iniquity, for I have done evil before thee, and my transgressions are gone over my head. And he confesses that before his justification his doings were naught, nor consonant unto equity; and therefore this parenthesis cometh not well in this place.

84. "For the first offence of our father Adam." No man shall be damned for the offences of Adam, but for his own proper offences, either actual or original; which original sin every man hath of his own, and is born in it, although it come from Adam.

85. "The principal mean whereby all sinners attain this justification." This sentence imports that the favour and love of the Father of heaven towards us, is the mean whereby we come to his favour and love, and so should one thing be a mean to itself. And it is not the use of scripture to call any other the mean or mediator for us, but only Jesus Christ, by whom our access is to the Father, so that it is a strange thing to attribute unto the Father this word "mean," but his love was the original and beginning of our salvation.

87. "Having assured hope and confidence in Christ's mercy, willing to enter into the perfect faith." He that hath assured hope and confidence in Christ's mercy, has already entered into a perfect faith, and not only has a will to enter into it. For perfect faith is nothing else but assured hope and confidence in Christ's mercy; and after it follows, that he shall enter into perfect faith by undoubted trust in God, in his words and promise, which also both are one thing: for these three are all one, 'perfect faith,' —'assured hope and confidence in Christ's mercy,'—and 'undoubted trust in God, in his words and promises.'

And, for a further declaration, to know how we obtain our justification, it is expedient to consider first, how naughty and sinful we are all, that are of Adam's kindred;

and contrariwise, what mercifulness is in God, who to all faithful* and penitent sinners pardons all their offences for Christ's sake. Of these two things no man is lightly ignorant, that ever hath heard of the fall of Adam, which was to the infection of all his posterity; and again, of the inexplicable mercy of our heavenly Father, who sent his only begotten Son to suffer his most grievous passion for us, and shed his most precious blood as the price of our redemption. But it is greatly to be wished and desired, that, as all christian men do know the same, so that every man might acknowledge and undoubtedly believe the same to be true and verified, even upon himself; so that both he may humble himself to God and acknowledge himself a miserable sinner, not worthy to be called his son; and yet surely trust that to him, being repentant, God's mercy is ready to forgive. And he that sees not these two things verified in himself, can take no manner of emolument and profit by acknowledging and believing these things to be verified in others. But we cannot satisfy our minds, and settle our conscience, that these things are true, saving that we evidently see that God's word so teaches us.

The commandments of God lay our faults before our eyes, which puts us in fear and dread, and makes us see the wrath of God against our sins, as St. Paul saith, By the law is the knowledge of sin; and, The law worketh wrath, and makes us sorry and repentant, that ever we should come into the displeasure of God, and the captivity of the devil. The gracious and benign promises of God by the mediation of Christ show us, and that to our great relief and comfort, whensoever we are repentant and return fully to God in our hearts, that we have forgiveness of our sins, are reconciled to God, and accepted, and reputed just and righteous in his sight, only by his grace and mercy, which he doth grant and give unto us for his dearly beloved Son's sake, Jesus Christ; who paid a sufficient ransom for our sins; whose blood doth wash away the same; whose bitter and grievous passion is the only pacifying oblation, that puts away from us the wrath of God, his Father; whose sanctified body, offered on the cross, is the only sacrifice of sweet and pleasant savour, as St. Paul saith: that is to say, of such sweetness and pleasantness to the Father, that for the same he accepteth and reputeth of like sweetness, all that the same offering doth serve for.

* Believing.

These benefits of God, with innumerable others, whosoever meditates upon, and well ponders in his heart, and thereby conceives a firm trust and feeling of God's mercy, whereof springs in his heart a warm love and fervent heat of zeal towards God, it is not possible but that he shall fall to work, and be ready to the performance of all such works, as he knows to be acceptable unto God. And these works only, which follow justification, do please God; for so much as they proceed from a heart endued with pure faith and love to God. But the works which we do before our justification, are not allowed and accepted before God, although they appear ever so great and glorious in the sight of man. For after our justification only begin we to work as the law of God requires. Then we shall do all good works willingly, although not so exactly as the law requires, by means of the infirmity of the flesh. Nevertheless, by the merit and benefit of Christ, we, being sorry that we cannot do all things more exquisitely and duly, all our works shall be accepted and taken of God, as most exquisite, pure, and perfect.

Now, they that think they may come to justification by performance of the law, by their own deeds and merits, or by any other mean than is above rehearsed, they go from Christ, they renounce his grace. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (Gal. v.) They are not partakers of His justice that he has procured, or the merciful benefits that are given by him. For St. Paul shows a general rule for all them that will seek such by-paths to obtain justification; those, saith he, who will not acknowledge the justness or righteousness, which cometh by God, but go about to advance their own righteousness, shall never come to that righteousness which we have by God; which is the righteousness of Christ: by whom only all the saints in heaven, and all others, that have been saved, have been reputed righteous, and justified. So that to Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer, on whose righteousness both their and our justification doth depend, is to be ascribed all the glory thereof.

CATECHISMUS,

THAT IS TO SAY,

A SHORT INSTRUCTION INTO CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

FOR THE SINGULAR COMMODITY AND PROFIT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

SET FORTH BY

THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN.

1548.

Strype, in his life of Cranmer, says, "This year (1548) the archbishop put forth a very useful catechism, entitled 'A short Instruction into Christian Religion, for the singular commodity and profit of Children and Young People.' This catechism went not by way of question and answer, but contained an easy exposition of the ten commandments, the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the two sacraments. The first and second commandments were put together as one, and the whole recital of the second omitted, according to the use in those times; but that commandment is explained under the first. The substance of this book is grave, serious, and sound doctrine. It is said in the title-page to be overseen and corrected by the archbishop. Indeed it was a catechism wrote originally in the German language for the use of the younger sort in Nuremberg, translated into Latin by Justus Jonas, junior, who now was entertained by the archbishop in his family, and thence turned into our vulgar tongue by the archbishop or his special order."

In his answer to Gardiner, Cranmer speaks of "the catechism of Germany by me translated and set forth;" and in his replies to the interrogations of the Romish commissioners, we find that "As for the catechism, the book of articles, with the other book against Winchester, he granted the same to be his doings." The account of Ridley's conference with secretary Bourn, and others, in the Tower, (see Ridley, p. 62,) states that the secretary referred to this catechism as a book set forth in "my lord of Canterbury's name," but added, "I think you can tell who made it, did not you make it?" Ridley then says, "And here was much murmuring of the rest, as though they would have given me the glory of the writing of that book, which yet was said by some there to contain the most heinous heresy that ever was. 'Master secretary,' quoth I, 'that book was made by a great learned man, who is able to do the like again: as for me, I assure you, be not deceived in me, I was never able to do or to write any such thing; he passes me no less than the learned master his young scholar.'"

Strype considers that Ridley here referred to Cranmer and this catechism, and adds, "This book is but a translation out of Latin made by a Lutheran author; but there are additions in the English, as accommodated to the English church, which were not in the Latin, but put in, as it seems, by the archbishop, particularly the whole second sermon, as it is called, on the first commandment (more truly the second) about images." Strype's Memorials, ii. p. 1, c. v.

It is probable that Cranmer translated this catechism himself, and that when Dr. Taylor spoke of it in his examination before Gardiner, as "not of Cranmer's own making," he only meant that it was not originally written by him. The order of subjects followed in this catechism, and many of the observations, are very similar to those of the "Catechismus major" of Luther, which is one of the symbolical books of the Lutheran churches. It contains an excellent summary of religious doctrine, suited for the uninstructed of every age, but especially for youth, and doubtless, as Dr. Taylor declared to the popish prelates, "truly that book for the time did much good."

The limits of the present work rendered the omission of some portion of this catechism necessary.

CATECHISM.

The Preface.

This treatise, gentle reader, is not written for the curates and preachers, for many of them have so much knowledge in holy scripture (thanks be to God) that they are already sufficiently instructed in these matters. But it is written for the behoof of the young children, which must be brought up with plain and short lessons. For we see daily by experience, that whosoever will teach children, must use much discretion and wisdom, not to give them too much at one time, lest he dull and oppress their wits; and yet that which he gives them, he must often and many times rehearse and repeat unto them again, as near as he can, after one manner and with the same words. For, if they teach them now this, now that, now with these words, now with others, then the children learn little or nothing: they keep almost nothing in memory; and besides that, they wax weary of learning, and conceive a loathsomeness thereto, and are more slothful and unapt to learn.

Forasmuch, therefore, as it was to be feared that every pastor would not take the pains to draw out such a short form of teaching to the children, nor have we thought good to burden every one with so great labours; and also, if every pastor severally should devise a form for his parish, it might chance, that there should be as many sundry forms as there are pastors, which diversity might engender much division and controversy, and also be much hinderance to the children, if in one place they learn one form, and in another place another form. For to eschew the said inconveniences we have thought good to devise this short manner and form to instruct children and young men, whereby they may both shortly and easily learn the chief principles and beginning of christian religion and doctrine; and learn as well how they ought to live, as also what they should believe. And when they have learned this in their tender age, they shall not only understand godly sermons, and all other godly doctrine and books the better, but also they shall become godly men and wise lovers of true religion and godliness; and to all states and orders of life,

as well ecclesiastical as civil, be more apt and toward. Unto which godly purpose all fathers and mothers, curates and preachers, and all christian magistrates and officers, should with all their mind and endeavour give their aid and help. Whereunto God of his grace grant his favour and assistance. Amen.

A SHORT INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

A general beginning for all sermons.

Grace, peace, and mercy be with you all, from God the Father, and from his only begotten Son, Jesu Christ, our Lord: Amen. That we may profitably and with fruit teach and learn the word of God, let us call for grace and pray the Lord's prayer.

Our Father, &c.

A general preface to be rehearsed after the prayer in the beginning of each sermon, made upon the ten commandments.

The prophet David, good children, like a schoolmaster in the school of God, preaches thus in the 34th Psalm, Come hither, he saith, my sons, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whosoever desireth to live, and would fain see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips, that they speak no deceit; let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.

Now, my dearly beloved children, I know surely that there is none among you, but that he would wish to see good days, and lead a godly and quiet life. Then must you follow the counsel of the prophet David; with all diligence to learn the fear of the Lord, while ye are yet young and tender of age. For that which men learn not in their youth, the same do they learn in their age with more difficulty. Therefore learn now with all diligence the fear of the Lord, dear children; then shall you wax men of excellent virtue, and lead a godly life, and shall see good days. For a blessed and quiet life is not bought with riches, nor gotten by honour, but by learning the fear of God. And he that feareth his Maker, as an almighty God and Lord, who mercifully helpeth them that

are good, and grievously punisheth the wicked, he will diligently take heed that he does nothing contrary to God's pleasure; but will keep his commandments so much as is in his power. And such godly children prove learned and wise men, who may be able to profit others and the common-wealth also: as David saith in another place, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psal. cxi.

Wherefore, if you fear God, and have a desire to be occupied in godliness, then learn the TEN COMMANDMENTS, whereby God hath taught us what pleases and what displeases him; what is good, and what is evil. And if you learn these lessons perfectly, then thereby you shall purchase unto yourselves the beginning of true and godly wisdom; which is such wisdom, that many men, well stricken in years, do not attain to. And yet this wisdom and knowledge of the ten commandments is but only the beginning of wisdom, for it is the teaching of the law. But when the doctrine of faith in Christ is taught unto you, then you learn a greater and higher wisdom, which the ungodly or unfaithful do not understand or perceive; but God only gives it down from heaven, to make us fear him and believe his holy word. Wherefore, good children, learn now diligently the beginning of wisdom; that is to say, the holy ten commandments, and give so good ear unto them, that you may learn them without book, and rehearse them when you come home.

Here follow the ten commandments, which must be recited so tractably and distinctly, that children by often hearing of them may print them in their memories, and say them by heart.

These are the holy commandments of the Lord our God.

The first.* I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods but me.

The second. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for he shall not be guiltless before the Lord, that taketh his name in vain.

The third. Remember that thou sanctify the sabbath day.

The fourth. Honour thy father and thy mother, that

* In this catechism the ten commandments are divided in the order adopted by the church of Rome, and still continued in the Lutheran churches. The first and second commandments are united together, while the tenth is divided into two, which thus form the ninth and tenth. This is the order observed in Luther's catechism, and other writings of the German reformers. See p. 113.

thou mayest live a long life in the land which the Lord thy God shall give unto thee.

The fifth. Thou shalt not kill.

The sixth. Thou shalt commit no adultery.

The seventh. Thou shalt not steal.

The eighth. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

The ninth. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house.

The tenth. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Now, good children, these are the ten holy commandments of the Lord God, in which he has opened his will unto us, and has declared what is godly, and what is ungodly; what we should do, and what we should not do.

These ye shall learn with great diligence; not only to rehearse them, but also to understand what is meant by them, and what the Lord God requires of us in these his commandments. To the intent that when you are asked any question of them, you may answer to the purpose; and that also in time to come you may teach your children to fear God, after such sort and manner as you yourselves are now instructed. For it is a great shame both before God and the world, for a christian man to be ignorant in the commandments of God, and not to know that doctrine which pertains to every christian man; seeing that every christian man is bound openly to declare his doctrine, and to give a reckoning of his faith, when need shall so require, and to bring up his children in the same.

The First Sermon.

A declaration of the first commandment.

To the intent, good children, that you may better understand the law of the ten commandments, you must first of all know, that God gave to Moses the ten commandments, written in two tables of stone: wherefore they are divided in two parts. In the first table were written the three (four) first commandments pertaining to God, which teach us how we should behave ourselves towards God, as well inwardly in heart and mind, as outwardly in words and deeds. In the other table were graven seven (six) precepts pertaining to our neighbours, which teach us how we ought to order ourselves towards our princes,

magistrates, and rulers; towards our wives, children, and servants; and towards all states of men; teaching us that we should not be disobedient, that we do wrong to no man, that we hurt no man, that we lie not in wait to kill any man, that we defile not other men's wives, and, to be short, that we hurt not our neighbours, either in body, goods, or good name.

But now let us consider the first commandment, and the declaration of the same. *I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have none other gods but me.* This commandment, good children, teaches us how we ought to use our hearts towards God.

First, That we ought to acknowledge with all our heart, that God made heaven and earth and all things contained therein, and to take him only to be the true God, and to be our God.

Secondly, This commandment teaches us to fear him as a living God, because he punishes the ungodly; and to cleave unto him with a sure faith, because he is true and faithful, and does not deceive us in any thing which he hath spoken or promised.

Thirdly, This commandment teaches us to love him with all our heart, for of him we receive our life, our breath, our health, and all other gifts both bodily and spiritual. And we have not the least of his gifts by our deserts, but he pours them all upon us freely, through his infinite goodness and endless mercy.

Contrariwise we ought not to receive into our hearts, as God, any creature either in heaven or in earth; that is to say, we ought to fear no creature, either in heaven or in earth, so much as God. Neither ought we to put such confidence and trust in any thing; neither should we so heartily love any creature, as our Lord God omnipotent. For if we attribute to any creature so much fear, trust, love, as appertains only to Him that made all creatures, we presently make that creature our god, and of it we frame to ourselves an idol; which is a very heinous, an abominable, and horrible sin, directly against the first table, and the first and chief commandment of God.

Therefore such great offences the true and living Lord God will not leave unpunished; for he himself saith, I am the Lord, my title and my name is the Lord, I will not give my glory to another; meaning thereby, that he will not suffer that any other thing should be esteemed as God,

besides himself, or that we should give godly honour in heart, affection, word, or deed, to any creature, but only to Him that was never created, and yet did create all things.

But here, peradventure, you will muse, good children, asking this question, How can we have other gods before the Lord, seeing there is but one God, one Lord, who hath made heaven and earth? To this I answer, that indeed there is none other God, but that most excellent and omnipotent Lord. Lay sure hold on this article with a steadfast faith, good children; believe this, doubting nothing therein; cleave surely to this rock. But yet notwithstanding this, fools, infidels, and ungodly men take some other thing for their god, which indeed is not God, nor can be by any means. For, as many times we take some men for honest, rich, or noble, who are not so indeed, so oftentimes we fear something, as much as we do God, which is not God indeed. And of creatures we make gods three manner of ways.

The first is, When a man fears any creature, and thinks thus with himself, If such a thing be taken away from me; if such a great man be angry with me; if I escape not such a danger, then I am utterly undone, then I know not whither to run for aid and succour. Whither then shall I go? Who shall save or help me? If thou have any such thought of any creature truly in thy heart, thou makest it a god, although with thy mouth thou dost not call it a god. And this affection lies lurking so deeply hid within many men's hearts, that they themselves scarcely feel or perceive it. But this fear ought to be removed far from us. For we must cleave steadfastly by faith to the true and living God, and in all kind of adversity reason on this fashion: Although men of great power be mine enemies; although this or that peril press me very sore; although I see nothing before mine eyes but present death or danger; yet will I not despair, yet will I not mistrust God, yet will I not hurt my soul with sin. For I am sure that this creature, which so sorely persecutes, vexes, or troubles me, is no god, but is under the hand and power of the true living God. I know that one hair of my head cannot be taken away from me, without the will of Him who is only and alone the true living God. He is my Maker, my Lord, and my God. Him will I fear more than the mighty power of any man, more than the crafty imaginations of mine enemies, yea, more than any creature in

heaven or in earth. If I be wrongfully entreated, and suffer unjustly, he can easily deliver me, and so preserve me that no peril shall touch me.

The second way is, When men put their whole confidence in other things than in God, and have these or such like thoughts within themselves,—I would I had such riches or lands; I would such a man were my friend, then should I be rich, happy, and blessed; then should I be sufficiently armed against all chances that may happen to me in this world. They, that think thus, have such riches, lands, and creatures, for a god, although with their tongue they say not so. Yea, although this affection lie hid in our hearts so secretly, that we ourselves should scarcely know of it. But the godly may not suffer any such thoughts to enter into their hearts, but ought thus to reason with themselves: Although I have very great abundance of friends and riches, although I flow in pleasures, honour, and glory, and in all worldly things, which a man can desire; yet by these things I have not true salvation. For these creatures are not God, wherefore they cannot save me; neither deliver me from the tyranny of the devil, or the wrath of God. But the Lord is God alone. If I displease Him, he is able to take all my friends and riches away from me, or else otherwise to bring to pass that all these things shall work my destruction. Wherefore He alone is to be feared, and in him alone we must fasten the anchor of our trust and confidence.

The third way is, When a man so heartily loves and delights in any thing besides God, that for it he does and suffers willingly all things that are to be done or suffered, not greatly regarding whether it pleases or displeases God. Then this man makes this creature, which he so fervently loves, his God, though in words he does not utter it.

But let christian people weed out from the bottom of their hearts, the roots of such inordinate love of any creature. And let them think after this sort: Wherefore should I offend God for this or that thing? I know that this lucre, or this honour, upon the which I am tempted and do so much set my heart, is not God. It is but a creature which cannot save me, neither deliver me from death, or any other adversity. Wherefore I will love only my God with all mine heart. I will do all things for his sake chiefly, and I will only, above all things, obey him.

Hitherto you have heard, how by these three ways, by

fearing, by trusting, and by loving, we may easily make a god of a creature, which indeed is no god, but rather an idol, set up by our own vain fancy. But this is a horrible sin against the first commandment of God, and so much the more perilous, because it lurks in the corners of man's heart most secretly. The world is full of this sin; and especially they that have hypocritical hearts; for all their painted holiness is infected with the rust of these vices. And to the intent that you may the better know these heinous offences against the first commandment, and the sooner avoid them, I will declare them unto you by a few and short examples.

Some there are who do greatly fear the conjunctions and influences of the heavenly planets and bodies above.

Further, There are many that stand in such awe of tyrants, that for fear of them they deny the true word of God.

Some men also put their whole affiance in money, and fancy that those who have plenty of money can lack nothing. Therefore they give themselves wholly to covetousness and to the desire to hoard up riches; they set their mind upon filthy lucre; they scratch what they can, not regarding whether they get by right or by wrong.

Such men worship their riches for their God. But St. Paul, in the 3rd chapter to the Colossians, saith, Forsake covetousness, which is a service to idols.

Some set their trust in their own works, thinking that by them they may be delivered from sin, reconciled to the favour of God, justified before him, and by them also to attain eternal salvation. These have their merits and works in the stead of God. This is the greatest idolatry that can be under the sun, and a plain denial of the faith in Christ.

Others there are that be servants to their own bellies, giving themselves wholly to eating and drinking and bodily pleasures; so much so that in comparison with bodily pleasures they either despise, or else forget God. Such men make their belly their god, as St. Paul writes of them, saying, Some there are which, selling the word of God, do teach perversely, whose God is their belly. But that wherein they do now glory shall be their confusion. By these examples you may easily perceive how by too much fearing, trusting, and loving, we make a god of a creature, which indeed is not God.

And besides these abuses, there is another that makes an idol of the true and living God. And that is, when we

imagine by our own heads another form and shape of God and his will than is true, and otherwise than he himself has declared to us in his word.

Wherefore, good children, take heed of such imaginations, that you frame not to yourselves within the temple of your hearts any strange god or idol. But suffer the Lord to be your God, for he offers himself very lovingly, and with a fatherly affection, to be your God. Therefore he saith to each of you, I am the Lord thy God, that is to say, I am your Lord and your Father, and I would fain that you should take me for your very God only. If I am your Lord, where is the fear due unto me? Only fear me as your Lord; obey me with all your heart; trust in me; pray to me; call upon me, and love me, good children, as your Father.

It were our bounden duty to pray unto him with most fervent desire that he would vouchsafe to be our God. But his goodness is so much inclined towards us, that he prevents us, and before we desire him he offers himself to us, saying, I am the Lord thy God. Only acknowledge me for God. When he saith, I am thy God, it is as much as if he should say, I will pour all kinds of benefits upon thee: whatsoever kind of adversity troubleth thee, make thy moan to me; whensoever thou lackest any thing, ask it of me. I am not far from thee, I am thy God. At all times I will be present with thee, and I will keep thee in all things.

Now, good children, diligently learn ye this lesson, and grave it in your memories; so you shall love God, and put your trust in him. For this is the meaning of this first commandment, that we ought to fear and love the Lord God above all things, and fasten our hope in him. Wherefore, good children, with all diligence learn you this rule. And when this question shall be demanded of you, How do you understand the first commandment? then shall ye answer thus: In this precept we are commanded to fear and love God with all our heart, and to put our whole trust and confidence in him.

The conclusion. Now ye have heard, good children, in a brief sum, the true, sincere, and plain exposition of the first commandment. Bear away, I pray you, this doctrine, and diligently record it. Walk in the fear of the Lord, that you transgress not these commandments. For whatsoever God biddeth, that is right, just, good, and holy; whatsoever he forbiddeth, that is wrong, unjust,

evil, and sin: he himself requires of us to keep his commandments, and not despise them. For he saith, I am the Lord thy God, a strong and a jealous God, which do punish the children that do hate me, even to the third and fourth generation, for the iniquity of their parents. And contrariwise, I do show mercy to a thousand generations of them that love me and keep my commandments. In these words God threatens grievous punishments to all that break these commandments. Wherefore it is our duty to fear his indignation and punishment, and not to provoke his wrath upon us by our disobedience. And on the contrary, he promises his favour and goodness to all them that keep these his commandments. Therefore we ought to love Him, cast our affiance upon him, and obey his commandments. And especially ye, good children, ought to fear God, keep his precepts, and to desire grace and help of him, that you may perform and fulfil them. For the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom, and it makes men godly, and disposes them to all good works. And such, having the favour of God, may profit many both in common and private affairs. Out of this fear of God springs also a good conscience, peace, and quietness of the same, as you have heard out of the psalm which was rehearsed in the beginning of the preface. And if we continue to the end of our lives in this true knowledge and faith of God, then he, over and beside the foresaid benefits, will give unto us life everlasting; the which may He grant unto you, that is blessed for ever. Amen.

(Note, that both the preface and the conclusion, also, of this first sermon should be repeated, the one in the beginning and the other in the latter end, in every sermon made for the residue of the commandments.)

The Second Part of the First Sermon.

Ye have heard, good children, in the former sermon, that all manner of idolatry is forbidden by this commandment; *Thou shalt have none other gods but me.* Where also it was declared unto you how you may commit spiritual idolatry, by over-much fearing, trusting, and loving of creatures. But now I will speak of the most gross idolatry which standeth in worshipping of images, either of creatures or of God himself.

And this idolatry is forbidden by express words in this

commandment, where God saith thus; *Thou shalt make thee no graven image, nor any likeness of any thing, which is in heaven above or in earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down unto it, nor worship it.*

These words, by most interpreters of late time, are made to belong to the first commandment, although, after the interpretation of many ancient authors, they are the second commandment.* In which words it is to be noted, that it is not without great cause that God with such plain and express words, hath forbidden worshipping of images. For he saw that man's corrupt nature, from the first time that he fell from God, has ever been inclined and ready to idolatry, and to bow down to creatures, rather than to look up to God that made him. Wherefore He forbids all occasions of the same.

God did also foresee, that, in the latter days, men should come, who would maintain worshipping of images, not only with painted colours, but also with painted words, saying, We kneel not to the image, but before the image. We worship not the image, but the thing which is represented by the image. We worship not the creatures, but the Creator in the creatures. And such like excuses the greatest idolaters did always pretend. But to the intent that they should not so deceive you, God oftentimes in holy scripture calls upon you, saying, *Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image or likeness of any creature. Thou shalt not kneel, nor bow thyself down to it.* For what can be more contrary to the dignity of man, than that he, whom God hath made lord over all creatures, should kneel or do reverence to the image of a creature!

God hath so fashioned man, that he hath given him a body standing straight up, and a countenance to look upward into heaven. And why then should he bow himself downward to the earth, or to creatures made of earth, which are rather to be trodden under his feet, than to be worshipped of him? There is nothing more against reason, than that he who hath life, sense, and reason, should worship a thing which can neither see, feel, move, hear, nor understand. Wherefore God saith plainly, Thou shalt not worship images; that is to say, Thou shalt not gild them and set them in

* They are so restored by most of the Protestant churches.

costly tabernacles, and deck them with coats or skirts; thou shalt not cense them, make vows or pilgrimages to them, set candles before them, and offer unto them. Thou shalt not kiss their feet, and bow down unto them.

For God saith; *I am a jealous God, and will not give my honour to any creature, but will grievously punish them that break this my commandment. Yea, I will punish their children and posterity unto the third and fourth generation.*

And this indignation of God against idolaters has, at sundry times, been showed by grievous punishments, for our examples.

For Solomon's idolatry the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were divided; and thereof did ensue a continual discord between those two kingdoms. And, for idolatry, God commanded Moses to hang the captains of the people; and of the people were slain twenty-four thousand. And the books of the Judges, Kings, and the Prophets, are full of like histories, how almighty God, for idolatry, was offended with the Israelites, and gave them into the hands of their enemies, and into the subjection and bondage of all nations about them, who did persecute and kill them. And when they, in their afflictions, cried unto the Lord, he refused them, saying, Go and cry to the gods you have chosen, will they save you in the time of your necessity?

What greater punishment can there be than this, to be cast away from God, when we have most need of his help and comfort? And in Deuteronomy, almighty God commanded by his prophet Moses, saying, Cursed be he that shall make a graven or molten image, abominable before the Lord, the work of an artificer's hand, and shall set it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.

Here you see, how he is accursed of God that sets but one image in a secret corner of his house to worship it. But much more danger it is to set up images in the temple of God, which is the open and common place to honour the only living God.

For as it is forbidden to have any strange gods, so is it also forbidden to have any image of the true living God. And if any will say, that it is forbidden to make an image of God to the intent to worship it, but I do not worship it, nor have it for that intent, but only that it may stir me to the remembrance and knowledge of God: to this I answer,

that God forbids the making of his image, lest this peril should follow, that thou shouldst worship it. Therefore thou dost offend although thou dost not worship it, and that not only, because thou doest it against God's word and commandment, but also because thou puttest thyself wilfully in very great peril and danger; especially seeing, that of our corrupt nature we are most highly inclined to idolatry and superstition, as experience, from time to time, hath taught us, even from the beginning of the world. And here appears the abuse of our time, which, following rather the fancy of carvers or painters, than the word of God, have set up in churches the image, as they call it, of the Trinity, where they portrayed God the Father like an old man, with a long hoary beard. And what can simple people learn hereby but error and ignorance? Have not many thought that God the Father is a bodily substance, and that he hath a face and beard, hands and feet, because they see him so painted? And for this consideration, saith Augustine, it is a detestable thing for christian men to have any such image of God in the church; whereby it appeareth that in Augustine's times there were no such images in christian churches, but that it is an invention of the papists, brought in of later years, which brings us not unto the true knowledge of God, but leads us into errors and ignorance of God.

If you will lift up your minds to God, good children, to know his divine majesty, his infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and his other godly perfections; look not upon a deaf, dumb, blind, lame, and dead image, made by a painter or carver's hands: but look upon heaven and other creatures made by God's own handiwork; look upon man, who can speak, see, smell, hear, feel, and go, and hath life, will, and reason, and whom no man, but God himself, made to be his lively image and similitude.

We have also the holy scriptures, which declare unto us the wonderful works of God, by which things we may be led to the knowledge of God, without painted or carved images. Now, peradventure, some will say, that Christ hath a body, and so likewise have saints, and therefore of them we may have images, although of God there can be made no image. And further, they will say, that the cause why images were forbidden, was peril of idolatry and worshipping of them. So that where there is no such peril we may have images.

Yet, as I will not utterly deny but they may be had, so I think it more convenient for Christ's religion that they should be taken out of christian men's churches, than that they should be placed in the temple of God. And of this my opinion, I will show you certain good grounds, to the intent that when you are demanded, why we Englishmen have no images in our churches, you may be able to make thereunto a reasonable answer. And that also, in time to come, you may declare to your children what abuses have crept into the church by the occasion of images; that if any man shall hereafter go about craftily to bring in images again for his own lucre sake, they may the sooner perceive his juggling, and so the better avoid the peril and danger.*

First, It is certain that we neither have commandment, counsel, nor example of the scripture, nor of the primitive church in the apostles' time, nor many years after, to set up images in our churches. As it may appear by the holy man, Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, a man of great estimation, eleven hundred years since, for his great learning and virtue. He, in an epistle which he wrote to the bishop of Jerusalem, which epistle Jerom translated out of Greek into Latin, writes, that as he passed the country about Jerusalem, he found in a church a cloth painted, having the image of Christ, or of a saint. And when I saw, said he, an image of a man hang in the church of Christ, contrary to the authority of the scripture, I cut it in pieces, and counselled them to bury some poor dead man therein. And afterwards he wrote to the bishop of Jerusalem, that he should command all the priests not to suffer such images, being contrary to our religion, to hang in the church of Christ. Whereby it appears that in those days images were not allowed to be set up in churches among christian men, yea, although it were the image of Christ, or any saint, but that the usage of images began after that time.

And if we will believe ancient histories, images were brought into churches by the policy and force of the bishops of Rome, many good christian emperors withstanding the same to their power. But idolatry, by the bishops of Rome, prevailed, and seduced many christian realms.†

Moreover, many images teach nothing else but erroneous and superstitious doctrine. For instance, what teaches

* See the third part of the homily against Idolatry.

† See the History of the Church of Christ.

the picture of St. Michael weighing souls, and our Lady putting her beads in the balance? Forsooth, nothing else but superstitiousness of beads, and confidence in our own merits and the merits of saints, and nothing in the merits of Christ.

For whereas our good works be not able to weigh against the devil, our Lady must lay her beads in balance, that is to say, will-works devised of our own brains, not commanded of God, and by them to save us: which doctrine is very false and injurious to Christ. What did the image of St. Sunday* teach? But that Sunday was a holy man, according to which teaching beggars asked their alms for Saint Sunday's sake. But I will leave to speak of the evil doctrine which was taught by images, and I will declare unto you that images have been so abused, that all the goodness which might come by them, was never comparable to the great ignorance and blindness, the superstition and idolatry, which have been brought in and committed by means of them. The which abuses, good children, your own fathers, if you ask them, can well declare unto you. For they themselves were greatly seduced by certain famous and notorious images, as by our lady of Walsingham, our lady of Ipswich, St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Anne of Buxton, the Rood of Grace, and such like; whom many of your parents visited yearly, leaving their own houses and families. To them they made vows and pilgrimages, thinking that God would hear their prayers in that place, rather than in another place. They kissed their feet devoutly, and to them they offered candles and images of wax, rings, beads, gold and silver abundantly. And because they, that so taught them, had thereby great advantage, they maintained the same with feigned miracles and erroneous doctrine, teaching the people, that God would hear their prayers made before this image, rather than before another image, or in another place; whereas the prophet Isaiah saith, that God doth hear those that are truly penitent in every place alike. But, peradventure, some will say, They did never teach us to kneel to the image, but before the image. But who, I pray you, gave them commission to teach you to kneel before the image? If you make your prayers to God, why lift you not both your eyes and hands

* Probably St. Dominic, the originator of the inquisition! He was the founder of an order of begging friars.

to heaven where God is? Why look you rather upon the walls, upon stocks and stones, than thitherward, where you know He is, to whom you make your prayers? What needest thou, who art the image of God, to kneel before the image of man?

Again, they that are grieved with taking down of images out of the churches, will perchance say, We worshipped not the image, but the saint, whom the image did signify. And who, I pray you, commands you after this fashion to worship any saint? Why should we give that honour to saints, now after their death, which they themselves, when they were alive, did utterly refuse? If a christian man, although he were indeed a very holy man and a living saint, should set himself upon an altar in the church, you would say to him, Come down, sir, that is no place for you to stand in. And why should then dumb images stand there, when they are dead, where thou canst not suffer the true images and members of Christ and lively saints to be placed? Peter refused to be worshipped of Cornelius, and likewise did Paul and Barnabas to be honoured of men; and the angel also refused to be honoured of a man, forasmuch as special honour and service appertains only to God.

Nevertheless, in civil honour and service we are subject to kings, princes, parents, masters, and all superiors, to honour and serve them of duty, as God requires of us. But all these things cease after their death; and they that will say they neither worship images, nor the saints in images, but God only in the saints and images, they pretend the same excuse that the heathen idolaters did: for they said likewise, that they worshipped not blocks nor stones, but God in them; and yet they were great idolaters.

It is not also taught you in all the scripture that you should desire St. Rock to preserve you from the pestilence, to pray to St. Barbara to defend you from thunder or gunshot, to offer to St. Loy a horse of wax, a pig to St. Anthony, a candle to St. Sithe. But I should be too long if I were to rehearse unto you all the superstitions that have grown out of the invocation and praying to saints departed, wherewith men have been seduced, and God's honour given to creatures.

Thus, good children, I have declared how we were wont to abuse images; not that hereby I condemn your fathers, who were men of great devotion, and had an earnest love

towards God, although their zeal in all points was not ruled and governed by true knowledge; but they were seduced and blinded partly by the common ignorance that reigned in their time, partly by the covetousness of their teachers, who abused the simplicity of the unlearned people to the maintenance of their own lucre and glory. But this have I spoken to show you how crafty the devil and his ministers have been, even of late time, to allure christian men to idolatry, under the pretence and title of devotion, holiness, and religion; that you, being warned of such abuses, may the better know and avoid them, in case at any time Satan or his messengers would entice you into such superstition again. For if mariners, who have passed the dangers of the seas, and are safely entered into the haven, are naturally moved to show to such as sail to those places from whence they came, what perils they shall pass by, and how also they may avoid the same; how much more ought we, that have already passed the deep seas and dangers of superstition, to warn you, good children, of these perils, and to teach you, who are now, as it were, entering into the troublesome seas of this world, how you may avoid these so great dangers. And it is very necessary for preachers at all times to admonish, exhort, and call upon you to avoid this most heinous and detestable sin of idolatry. For not only the prophets in the old testament were very earnest to call upon the Jews to avoid this sin of idolatry, but the apostles also are very diligent to dissuade christian men from the same. And we have too much experience in the world, that of images cometh worshipping of them and idolatry. For Augustine, upon the 113th psalm, affirms, that simple men are more moved and stirred to bow down to images and worship them, because they have mouths, eyes, ears, noses, hands, and feet, than they are moved to contemn them, although they perceive they can neither speak, see, smell, feel, nor go.

It cannot be said that images are necessary, for then we condemn the apostles and all the holy men in the primitive church; yea, and Christ himself also, because they used no such thing: nor yet that they be profitable, for if they had, either Christ would have taught it, or the Holy Ghost would have revealed it unto the apostles, which they did not. And if they did, the apostles were very negligent that would not make some mention of it, and speak some good word for images, seeing that they speak so many

against them. And by this means antichrist and his papists had more knowledge or fervent zeal to give us godly things, and profitable for us, than had the very holy saints of Christ, yea, more than Christ himself and the Holy Ghost. Now forasmuch, good children, as images are neither necessary nor profitable in our churches and temples, nor were used at the beginning in Christ's nor the apostles' time, nor many years after, and that at length they were brought in by bishops of Rome against the emperor's power; and seeing also that they are very slanderous to Christ's religion, for by them the name of God is blasphemed among the infidels, Turks, and Jews, who, because of our images, call christian religion idolatry and worshipping of images. And forasmuch also, as they have been so wonderfully abused within this realm to the high contumely and dishonour of God, and have been a great cause of blindness and of much contention among the king's majesty's loving subjects, and are likely so to be still, if they should remain; and chiefly seeing God's word speaks so much against them, you may hereby right well consider what great causes and grounds the king's majesty had to take them away within his realm; following herein the example of the godly king Hezekiah, who brake down the brazen serpent when he saw it worshipped, and was therefore greatly praised of God, notwithstanding, at the first, the same was made and set up by God's commandment, and was not only a remembrance of God's benefits, before received, but also a figure of Christ to come. And not only Hezekiah, but also Manasseh, and Jehosaphat, and Josiah, the best kings that were of the Jews, pulled down images in the time of their reigns.

So good children, you have heard the true meaning of these words; Thou shalt make to thee no graven image, thou shalt not bow down and worship the same. I pray you engrave them deeply in your memories, that when you are demanded what is meant by the words heretofore rehearsed, you may answer, This commandment forbids all kind of idolatry, as well bodily as spiritual, and inhibits us to give the honour which is due unto God, to any creature, or image of creature; but to worship God alone.

And now note further, good children, to the intent we should honour only God and obey him, that he saith, He is the Lord our God, in whom are all good things, and of whom we have all. He saith also, that he is strong and

of such force, that he can punish us at his pleasure if we disobey him. Moreover, he calls himself jealous, because he can abide no companion; but as a man, the more pure and chaste he is, the more he is grieved, if he perceive his wife to set her love upon any other, even so is God, who hath taken us to be his spouse, if he see us defiled with filthy idolatry. Furthermore, he saith, that he will avenge his majesty and glory, if any man will translate them unto any creature, picture, or image; and that with such vengeance, that it shall extend unto their children, nephews, and nephews' children. Like as on the other side he promises his mercy and goodness to their posterity that keep his law and commandments. Employ therefore your whole hearts and minds to his precepts, good children, and eschewing all idolatry or honouring of carvings or paintings, give to God alone, his due honour and glory, now and from henceforth, world without end. Amen.

The Second Sermon.

You have heard the declaration of the first commandment, in which we are taught how we ought to behave ourselves towards God in our hearts; now follows the second (third) commandment, which is this:

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for he shall not be guiltless in the sight of the Lord, that taketh his name in vain.

This commandment, good children, teaches us how we ought to behave ourselves towards God in words, bidding us not to speak of the name of God in vain, or without great cause, but to use it only when it tends to the praise and glory of God, and to the profit of our neighbour; that every man may perceive by our words and communication, that we in our hearts do reverently and humbly fear, magnify, and worship God and his holy name. For by this, our good example, other men are excited and encouraged to glorify the name of God. And, contrariwise, when in scoffing and jesting we lightly abuse the name of God, then other men are offended, and thereby also are made more irreverent towards God, and consider less of God and godly things, and so by this means we burden ourselves with another man's sin. For Christ saith in the gospel of St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter, He that giveth cause of offence to any of the weak brethren, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and so

drowned in the bottom of the sea. Wherefore, I pray you, diligently beware that you give no such kind of offence to your brethren. Wherefore ye shall now learn how the name of God is taken in vain, to the intent you may the sooner avoid this sin. For the name of God is taken in vain divers ways.

The first is, when men give the title and name of God to those things which are not God indeed. As the heathen called the sun, the moon, and the stars, gods; also they called certain men, as kings and tyrants, gods; and as the Jews did, who made a calf of gold, and said, This is the god which brought us out of Egypt. And this, good children, is so heinous a fault, that God, in the old testament, commanded him to suffer death that should commit this sin; and if any city had so offended, he willed the same city to be burned and utterly destroyed, and all that were found therein to be killed. Therefore let us diligently avoid this offence, or else God will horribly punish us.

The second way of taking the name of God in vain, is, when we forswear ourselves, or swear deceitfully, either in common judgment, or in our daily affairs and communication, intending thereby to deceive our neighbour. Wherefore, you must diligently take heed, that you use not to swear lightly, through an evil custom, but do as Christ teaches us. Let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay. But when necessity drives you to an oath, or the public officer commands you to swear, then be not forsworn, but speak the truth, and faithfully perform and observe that which you have sworn. And if it shall befal, that any of you in time to come, when you shall come to man's estate, be called to any office in the commonwealth, beware that you give no cause nor occasion to others to make oath unnecessarily. For whatsoever sin is committed by such oaths, that God imputes to the officer who exacts the same, and not to the subjects who are bound to obey, not only for fear of punishment, but also for conscience sake.

Thirdly, We abuse the name of God, not only in vain, but also very ungodly, when, with horrible cursing and damning by the name of God, we wish to others the vengeance of God. Which sin now in our time is most used. Insomuch that now-a-days you shall hear not only men, but also women and children, outrageously curse and damn both themselves and others, saying many devilish curses

and wishes;* which offence is not only abominable before God, but also so shameful before the world that good christian ears abhor to hear such heinous blasphemy. For St. Paul, in the second chapter of the epistle to the Philippians, writes thus; In the name of God all knees do bow down, both in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, that is to say, not only angels and men do worship our Lord and God Jesus Christ, but also the damned spirits and devils in hell do quake at his name, and by their trembling do declare that they most reverently acknowledge the name of his majesty. But these more than devilish swearers, damners, and cursers, without reverence to the most honourable name of God, without courtesy or bowing to him, who with a beck makes all the world to shake, do blow and bluster out of their ungodly mouths such blasphemies, that by the same they do not only highly dishonour God, but also wish to their neighbours all kinds of miseries, plagues, and adversities that can be imagined; whereas our duty is to love our neighbour, and wish well to him as to ourselves. Now consider, what a great wickedness it is to wish evil things to men by the name of God, seeing that by this name we ought to desire and pray for all good things, both to ourselves and to our neighbours.

Wherefore, when ye hear any man using such spiteful curses and blasphemies of God's name, doubt not, but that he in the deed is worse than the devil himself. For the devil, when he hears God named, trembles thereat, and dares not so irreverently behave himself to that most holy name; whereas those wretched and most ungodly persons, shew no fear or reverence thereto at all. But ye, good children, take heed that you accustom not yourselves to such kind of blasphemies. And when you shall hear others outraging with such horrible curses, fly from them as from pestilence, and think thus with yourselves; I will convey me out of this naughty company, lest, peradventure, I also may be infected with this contagious custom of swearing and cursing, and so may be made at length more abominable in this point than is the devil himself.

Fourthly, The name of God is taken in vain, when men abuse the word of God, purposely making false expositions upon holy scripture, and wresting the same from the true

* It is not necessary to repeat the instances here given. Though the imprecations differ from those now unhappily so frequent, they were the same in effect, and equally to be abhorred.

sense to their evil purpose; or when men make a trifle or a laughing sport of the words of holy scripture. This abuse gives rise to a contempt of the word of God, and it corrupts or diminishes the authority of God's doctrine.

Fifthly, They do misuse the name of God, who abuse it to charms, witchcraft, sorceries, necromancies, enchantments, and conjurings. And this is not only a great sin, but a thing of its own nature most vain and foolish. For persuade yourselves this thing for a surety, good children, that all kind of witchcraft is of its own nature nothing else but lies, guiles, and subtleties, to deceive ignorant and simple men, as many have proved by experience to their great loss and utter undoing. Wherefore, beware of them, believe them not, do not learn them; neither fear that any other man's enchantments are able to hurt you.

Wherefore, good children, fear the Lord, and take not his holy name in vain. Beware of idolatry, forswear not, abstain from oaths and curses, refrain your tongues from all untruths, railings, scoffs, and jests, when you talk of holy scripture, or matters concerning religion; flee from all kind of witchcraft and enchantments. For to this commandment God has added a special threatening, saying thus: He shall not be guiltless before the Lord, that taketh his name in vain.

Believe surely, good children, that these are very weighty words and of great importance; and think not thus with yourselves, What? is this so great a matter? I spake not these words in earnest, but in sport. I pray you, for Christ's sake, do not defend your fault with such excuses, but beware that you take not in vain the name of God, either in earnest or in sport. For the holy name of God is to be worshipped with all honour and religion; and he that does not obey this commandment, him the Lord shall not count guiltless, but shall punish him grievously. And when God punishes, he sends among us sicknesses, pestilence, hunger, dearth, battle, robberies, sedition, manslaughter, and such-like; with these plagues he takes vengeance on our sins. Therefore we ought to fear his wrath, and not to take his name in vain.

Hitherto you have heard five ways, whereby we may take the name of God in vain; now it shall be declared to you how you should rightly and duly use the name of God. Consider, that we are professed into our religion, and baptized by the name of God: wherefore, good

children, listen diligently to this lesson, and learn that we ought to use the name of God three ways, by invocation and calling upon him, by confession of his name and his word, and by thanksgiving.

First, We are bound in all our necessities and perils to call upon the name of God; to fly to him for succour, with all our hope and confidence; and not to run to witchcrafts, charms, sorceries, and such like vanities. For God himself saith, Call upon me in the day of thy tribulation, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Here you hear, good children, that God commands us to call upon him, and not upon any other creatures besides him; and he saith in express words, Call upon me in the time of thy tribulation, in adversity, when thou art in need and danger. Wherefore no man should despair, whatsoever kind of afflictions befal him, but pray for help from heaven, and call upon the name of the Lord, who by his mighty and strong hand is able, and by his fatherly affection will deliver and help us, whatsoever and how great soever affliction and temptation overwhelm us; and therefore he saith, I will hear thy prayer.

Here mark, good children, that it is your bounden duty to pray to God, and that they do sin heinously who do not pray; wherefore, ye shall learn the Lord's Prayer, which Christ himself taught and appointed, and ye shall say it daily. For this commandment binds us to pray; forasmuch as it forbids the abuse of God's name, and commands his name to be used reverently and religiously. But we can give no greater honour to God's name than to call upon him, and with all our heart to pray to him; wherefore they keep not this commandment who do not daily pray.

Secondly, We must confess the name of God—that is to say, we ought openly to shew and declare our faith and belief in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ, and not to deny him, although the world would hate us therefore—yea, although tyrants would torment us most cruelly. For Christ has comforted us, and said, Fear not them that kill the body, and have no power to slay the soul. And in another place he saith, One hair of your head shall not perish without the will of your Father; wherefore let us not be afraid, but let us profess openly before all the world, the name and word of God and our faith. Furthermore, every man in his vocation ought to teach and instruct others, that, as much as lieth in us, all may come to the

knowledge of the truth, and when we do not this, then we sin and shall be damned, if we in time repent not. For Christ saith, I say unto you, whosoever confesseth me before men, the Son of man shall also confess him before the angels of God; but he that will deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

Thirdly, We ought to praise and magnify the name of God, and to thank him for all his benefits, both bodily and spiritual, which he hath given unto us, and ceases not daily and hourly to pour upon us most liberally. For so the Lord hath commanded in the psalms, saying, Call upon me in the day of thy tribulation, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt honour and glorify me. Here you perceive, good children, that God our heavenly Father hears our prayers, and heaps upon us infinite benefits, for this cause, purpose, and intent, that we should be glad and joyful to praise him, and with all our heart render thanks unto him. Wherefore, whensoever we pray, before we ask any new benefits, we ought to thank him for the old, and to glorify his name for the great treasures of gifts heretofore given unto us. And by this means, both He will be the more willing to hear our prayers, and also our faith shall be the more strengthened and confirmed. For when we call to our remembrance, how God oftentimes heretofore hath heard our supplications, and delivered us out of many and perilous dangers, we are thereby moved the less to doubt of his goodness, and stedfastly to hope that he now also will be as merciful unto us, as he was wont to be in times past. Therefore, saith the prophet David, I will call upon the Lord, praising him, and he will save me from mine enemies. Now therefore, good children, ye shall learn this lesson, and practise it diligently; first of all to praise and thank God for all his benefits, and afterwards to call upon him in all your necessities. So God will be more ready to hear your petitions, and your faith also thereby shall be the more nourished and increased. For he that will truly and effectually pray, before all others must believe and persuade himself for a surety that God will hear his prayer.

Wherefore, good children, now I pray you learn so to understand this commandment, that ye take not the name of God in vain, that ye give not yourselves to idolatry, that ye swear not customably, nor without a necessary cause, that ye never commit perjury, that ye curse nobody, that ye abuse not the name and word of God to

untruth, unclean, and unhonest communication, that ye apply not your minds to witchcraft and sorceries. For these faults as yet never escaped unpunished before God. Contrariwise, ye shall reverently use the name of God to his glory, and to the profit of your neighbour, by calling upon him, by praying and giving thanks unto him, and by open profession of his doctrine and religion.

And when ye shall be demanded, How understand ye this commandment? ye shall answer, We ought to love and fear God above all things, and not to abuse his name to idolatry, charms, perjury, oaths, curses, ribaldry, and scoffs. That under the pretence and colour of his name we beguile no man by swearing, forswearing, and lying, but in all our needs we should call upon him, magnify, and praise him, and with our tongues, confess, utter, and declare our faith in him and his doctrine.

The Third Sermon.

You have heard how the second (third) commandment is to be understood, in the which we learn how we ought to order ourselves towards God, both in heart and in words. Now follows the third (fourth) precept, which is this:

Remember, that thou sanctify the sabbath-day.

This commandment, good children, teaches how we should behave ourselves towards God in works. For when we have a mind to serve God, and to show to him, as to our Lord and Maker, the greatest pleasure that we can, then we must not choose by the advice of our own imagination either this or that work; but we must sanctify the sabbath-day, that is to say, employ and bestow it upon godly and holy works and business. And here note, good children, that the Jews in the old testament were commanded to keep the sabbath-day, and they observed it every seventh day, called the sabbath or Saturday. But we, christian men, in the new testament are not bound to such commandments of Moses' law concerning differences of times, days, and meats, but have liberty and freedom to use other days for our sabbath-days, therein to hear the word of God, and to keep a holy rest. And therefore that this christian liberty may be kept and maintained, we now no more keep the sabbath on Saturday as the Jews do, but we observe the Sunday, and certain other days, as the magistrates do judge it convenient, whom in this thing we

ought to obey. And to the intent you may the better perceive such things as shall be spoken herein, consider, I pray you, how wonderful a commandment this is. When worldly lords and masters receive men into their service, they bid them not keep holy day, but they set them to work, and appoint them divers labours to be done for their service and behoof. But our Lord God does not so with us in this commandment. He bids not us to do either this or that work, he commands us not to gad hither and thither on pilgrimage, to paint, gild, or clothe saints, images, to set up candles before them, nor to exercise any such feigned man's works, and false honouring of God, as the deceitful monks and friars were wont to teach us; but he bids us to rest from labours, and commands us to keep holy day. But yet note, good children, that when you hear say that God has commanded to rest from works, you must not gather hereof, that you should cease from such good works by which your neighbour is relieved; as to give alms to the poor, to preach the word of God, to instruct the ignorant, and such like, for God hath commanded such works to be done, and he earnestly requires them of us; but although we do these works ever so diligently, yet by them we only serve and help our neighbour, for God's sake. But when we will serve God only with such a kind of work that pertains not to our neighbour, but is proper and several to God alone, then God commands you not to set before your eyes any outward work, but to rest from such works. For this God requires of us in this commandment.

And now, good children, listen unto me, and you shall know the cause why God doeth thus. He is so rich a God, and his majesty is so mighty, that he hath no need of our outward works or worshippings. Again, he is so gentle, liberal, and merciful, that of his own accord he desires to do good to all men, whereby his name is praised and honoured. Therefore, he that will do pure service and honour to God, let him give himself to rest and quietness, not working to be made holy by his own outward works; but let him keep holy day, let him suffer the benefits of God to be poured liberally and freely upon him. For to believe that we receive all good things freely from God, and to acknowledge them with a true faith, and gladly to praise and thank God for the same, is the most excellent and highest honour that can be yielded to him in this life.

But it is not sufficient for us to keep the sabbath day. The Lord saith, Thou shalt sanctify the sabbath-day; that is to say, we should bestow that day about holy, heavenly, and godly things.

Now, if you desire to know with what holy works you should pass away this day, you shall understand that we can do no greater holy works, than to hear the word of God, and to learn the true fear of God, and the right faith in him, and to prepare ourselves that we may worthily be partakers of the Lord's table, thereby to receive great comfort, to the quiet of our consciences and confirmation of our faith. And moreover, on such days, chiefly we ought in faith and spirit fervently to pray to God, to give us all good things that we lack and have need of, and to defend and deliver us from all evil things. And, thus praying, we shall not fail to be heard.

These are the chief holy day works, by which God rather serves and works for us than we for him. For when he by his ministers causes his word to be preached unto us, when he distributes to us ineffable gifts of his sacraments, when he hears our prayers, he is beneficial unto us rather than we to him. Therefore the effect and sum of this commandment is, as God should say thus; Good children, will you serve me, and do that which may please me, then trust not in your own works, nor put your confidence in them. For I have no need of your labour and works. Come hither, I will teach you what ye ought to believe and to do. I will comfort you with the marvellous gifts of my sacraments. I will hear your prayers. You cannot give to me greater honour than to repair to me, and to suffer me that I may pour my benefits upon you, that you may acknowledge me to be your Father, that you may cast your whole affiance in me, and that you may love me, as children love their fathers and mothers.—But of this matter you shall hear more in the creed or articles of the faith.

In the mean time, you shall especially mark, that although every man hath need to labour daily for his daily food, yet God has given us sabbath-days, or resting times, in the which he has commanded not only the masters themselves, but also their servants and cattle, to cease from bodily labours. And yet on those days he feeds us, as well as on the working days. By which he signifies unto us, that although we toil not continually until we

are weary, yet he will give us abundantly all things necessary, when we obey his will, and first of all seek the kingdom of God, that all other things may be given us.

Hitherto, good children, you have been taught in what holy works you ought to spend the sabbath-day. Now it shall be declared unto you, how great a sin it is not to sanctify the same. Which sin is then committed, when we upon the holy days do not hear with great diligence and reverence, sermons and the most fruitful word of God; when we do not give our minds to prayer and other godly works, but to idleness, eating, drinking, banqueting, dancing, licentiousness, dicing, carding, backbiting, slandering, and other ungodly works. For which abuse of holy days God is grievously provoked, and punishes us grievously with divers kinds of plagues, but especially with need and poverty. For so God threatens in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, that men shall labour and toil both day and night, and yet shall not be able to work themselves out of poverty. And it is no marvel. For when God gives them resting days, they do not sanctify the same, they do not hear the word of God nor pray to him, but wickedly despise God and his honour, spending the sabbath-day in the above-named sinful and ungodly life; wherefore God justly punisheth them with poverty.

But, peradventure, you will say, God does not punish all the breakers of this commandment with need and poverty. Truth it is indeed, some there are whom God does not punish in this life, but defers their punishment until the hour of death, when they are utterly forsaken of him, which is a pain most horrible, and are everlastingly condemned, if they amend not in due time. Therefore, good children, eschew those sins that are so heinous in the sight of God, sanctify your sabbath-day, be desirous to hear the word of God, pray continually, and give thanks to God for all his benefits. In so doing you shall surely please him, and he shall send you his grace, favour, and blessing, that all things may prosper with you, that you may with joy and gladness serve your Lord God, and enjoy many sabbaths, or resting days. For God is well content that we have many resting days, so that we spend them well in holy and godly exercises, and cause not only our bodies to rest from labours, but also our minds from sin. For we must keep the sabbath-day, not only with our body, but also with our hearts and minds; which we do when we

bridle our own will and fleshly lusts, and with all reverence humble ourselves to God's will, so that when we rehearse the Lord's Prayer, we may say truly and heartily, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. For so God testifies by the prophet Isaiah, in the 58th chapter, saying, If thou wilt abstain from doing thy will on my holy day, then thou shalt call the sabbath-day pleasant. That is to say, when we submit our will to the holy will of God, and patiently suffer those things which he works in us and wills us to suffer; then we shall truly keep the sabbath-day, and therein laud and praise our Lord God. For this is no true keeping of the sabbath-day, when the body ceases from labours, and in the mean season a man's mind is wholly occupied, how he may deceive his neighbour, how he may obtain his pleasures, how he may revenge himself on his enemies; or else, when a man's heart boils with murmuring, grudging, and impatience, and does not obediently bend himself to the will of God, nor patiently suffer his works, but tosses and turmoils himself with his own cares, thoughts, and compassings. For when shall such a heart keep a sabbath or resting day, or earnestly praise God? Wherefore, let us learn to keep holy day, not only from bodily labours, but also from all evil thoughts and carnal desires. But these matters, good children, peradventure pass your capacities.

For men have business enough all their lifetime perfectly to learn and practise this lesson; wherefore, at this time, I will require no more of you, good children, but only to bear away this plain and short instruction, that the chief worshipping of God stands not in outward works, but when we keep the sabbath-day as well with mind as with body, when we hear the word of God, when by prayer we call upon his name, and are partakers of his sacraments. By which things we are admonished, instructed, strengthened, and defended, to be the more constant in our faith. And this is the true sense and meaning of this precept. Wherefore, good children, mark it well, I pray you, and when you are asked, How understand you this commandment? ye shall answer, We ought to fear and love our Lord God above all things, to hear diligently and reverently his holy word, and with all diligence to follow the same.

The Fourth Sermon.

You have heard the third (fourth) commandment, whereby we learn how to use ourselves towards God in our deeds and works. Now follows the fourth (fifth) commandment, which is this:

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest lead a long life in the land, which the Lord God shall give unto thee.

This, good children, is the first and chief commandment of the second table, which teaches us how we ought to behave ourselves toward our neighbour. And this commandment speaks of the most excellent and most dear personages unto us, that live upon the earth; as of our parents, and rulers of the commonwealth; and it teaches how we should order ourselves towards them, that is to say, to honour and dread them. It entreats of no small or trifling things, but contains matters of very great importance, and it gives great wisdom to all them that do rightly understand it. Wherefore, good children, listen to it diligently, that you may know the true meaning thereof. And first of all, ye shall understand, that God gave us these ten commandments for this cause, that by them we might learn what doth please him. For this is a doctrine most certain, that we upon earth can enterprize or work nothing, that may better please Him than to keep his commandments.

And they are most fools of all, that go about to serve God and win his favour with such works as he himself has not commanded. For of such Christ saith, in the 15th chapter of Matthew, They worship me in vain with the commandments of men. But this we may be sure of, that it pleases God we should honour our father and mother and obey them. And for this cause, all the [lawful] works also which they command us to do, please God, yea, the most vile works that they appoint us unto, as to sweep the house, to pour water into the laver, and such like. Now this is a very great comfort for us to know for a surety, that these small and drudging works do highly please God, because in doing them we obey our parents. Contrariwise, those kinds of worshipping God, those ceremonies and works which are done to please God without his commandment, and besides his word, do not at all please him, although the world ever so highly esteems and praises

them. For it is the commandment of God only, and nothing else, that makes our works holy and precious in his sight. Now here God commands us to honour our father and mother; that is to say, to stand in awe of them, willingly to obey them, to love them, and have them in reverence, and to help them with all the means we can. For these words, Honour thy father and mother, contain all these things. And we are bound to yield unto them this honour, forasmuch as God has given them unto us, as masters, tutors, governors, and rulers, in his stead; and by them has poured upon us many high and great benefits, whereby we are most strictly bound to honour them and not to despise them. But when we do not fear them, when we lightly regard them, when they are angry with us, then we despise them. And this is a very heinous sin before God; for in no wise we should contemn them, but ought to take very great heed that we displease them not, no not in trifling things. Also, when we do not obey them willingly, then also we despise them, for he that does not obey his father and mother, is a presumptuous person, and thinks himself wiser or better than they: and this is a great contempt and a heinous sin before God. Wherefore, good children, do not so despise your fathers and mothers; but obey them with all your heart, and be subject unto them.

Furthermore, when we do not love our fathers and mothers, then it is not possible that we should heartily honour them: wherefore we must bear a hearty and fervent love towards them; especially seeing that God has through them poured so many benefits upon us, as we shall declare more at large hereafter. Besides this, it is our bounden duty to use all kinds of gentleness and liberality towards our fathers and mothers, and in all things to shew kindness unto them before all other persons. For, when we do any pleasure to other men, we look that they should thank us for the same; but of our fathers and mothers we ought to look for no thanks, but with our benefits we must honour them. That is to say, we must order ourselves towards them no otherwise than we would do towards kings, princes, and lords, to whom, when we offer any present, we think not that they are bound to render unto us any great thanks for the same, but we humbly fall on our knees before them, instantly desiring them that they will vouchsafe to take in good part so small a gift; wherein we declare our good

will far to surpass our ability, and with all reverence we sue unto them, that of their clemency they will accept our good hearts and minds. On this fashion we ought to behave ourselves towards our fathers and mothers; and whensoever we are able to do them any pleasure, we must honour them after the said manner, and reverently beseech them, that they will take well in worth such small tokens of our duty and love towards them. For we cannot render unto our fathers and mothers any gift or present so weighty, that shall be able to counterpoise the kindness which they have deserved at our hands, nor can we in any part recompense the great goodness and benefits, which they have heaped upon us, without number.

So, good children, note well, I pray you, what is meant by this word 'honour,' which in this place comprehends fear, dread, reverence, obedience, and love, towards our parents; and that it is our duty to lade them with all kinds of gentleness and liberality. And when we have done all that we can do, yet not to look for thanks again at their hands, but rather to thank them that they would vouchsafe so gently to accept our small benefits. For God hath appointed them to be our masters, tutors, and governors, over us; wherefore of duty we owe unto them this service and obedience. And unless we order ourselves to our parents after such manner as is before rehearsed, God will be grievously offended with us, and sorely punish us: as it is plainly declared in Moses' law, in the 21st chapter of Deuteronomy.

Thereby you may learn, good children, how greatly this sin displeases God, seeing that in his law he has appointed so painful a punishment for disobedient children. Hitherto you have heard what it is to honour your parents; now hear also the cause why God has so diligently commanded this.

Our Lord God has given us so many benefits by our fathers and mothers, that no tongue can worthily express them. For God uses our parents as his means, by whom he gives us life, breath, food, and all things necessary to the maintenance of this life; therefore we ought to worship* them as the chosen instruments of God. And, forasmuch as God himself is invisible to us here in earth, whom we neither see bodily nor hear his voice, therefore he has appointed our fathers and mothers in his stead, to talk with us, and to teach us what we ought to do, and what to eschew.

* Honour.

Surely they are cruel children that honour not their parents, seeing they have received of them so great a heap of benefits. And truly they were worthy to be stoned to death, as stubborn children were wont to be in the old testament. Wherefore, good children, observe diligently this commandment, that ye be not disobedient nor unkind, but honour your fathers and mothers. And here you must not think, that you owe this subjection only to your fathers and mothers, but the same obedience and honour is due also to all those, whose help and labour your parents oftentimes use in governing and teaching you. Of which are your tutors, schoolmasters, preachers, pastors, and curates; your masters that teach you your crafts, and also the magistrates and common officers. For the holy scripture doth call all these fathers. And, therefore, when God saith, Honour thy father and mother, he comprehends within the bounds of this commandment all those persons before rehearsed.

Also it happens oftentimes that parents put their children to others, either because they themselves are not able to find them, or teach them handicrafts, or the art of merchandize; and when it is thus, then it is the office of children to obey in all things, and to honour, even as their parents, those to whom they are thus committed, and with whom they dwell. For unto such, their fathers and mothers have given their power and authority. Therefore St. Paul saith, Servants, be obedient unto your masters, as unto God, and so forth. (Eph. vii.). But when children grow to man's age, and then refuse to be ruled by their parents, masters, teachers, and curates, and begin to wax wild and wanton, and to hurt others, then the common officers ought to chastise them. And the magistrates and superior powers ought to be honoured and feared, even as our fathers and mothers. For by them we are defended from our enemies, of them we receive laws and statutes, whereby we may live in peace and quietness. Wherefore, we ought to be glad and willing to pay to them tribute, taxes, tollages, and subsidies; whereby they may be the better able to maintain the tranquillity of the commonwealth. Learn, therefore, good children, that they are not only called our parents, of whom we are begotten and born, but they also are called to the honour and title of this name who help them to bring us up in virtue and learning. Such are they, whom we call our tutors, or guardians, teachers, masters, curates, and officers.

Also this word, ' honour,' not only contains the outward gesture of making courtesy and putting off the cap, but they do truly honour their parents who fear and love them, highly esteem them, give place to them, and tender unto them all kind of gentleness and liberality, and yet do not upbraid them, or cast their gifts in their teeth, but confess that still they are in their parents' debt, and as yet owe them greater things. And this is a great point of wisdom, yea in worldly policy, to acknowledge that of bounden duty we owe to these persons, above rehearsed, honour and reverence, and that God is highly pleased with this kind of sacrifice ; and that he sends unto us by these men innumeable benefits. Wherefore if you will be counted good and godly children, and please God, then keep this commandment, obey your parents, and every common officer, fear them, be obedient to their laws and statutes, be subject unto them in all things. Notwithstanding, if the common officer do bid you do any thing expressly against God, then you may not obey him, but say with the apostle Peter, We must obey God rather than men.

And beware, good children, that you despise not your parents, or uncourteously treat them, because perchance they are simple men, rude, unlearned, poor, weak, feeble, and impotent by the reason of their old age. For of whatsoever state, condition, or quality they are, yet by them God hath given us our life, he hath ordained them to be our governors, and, as I have declared heretofore, by them he hath sent us infinite benefits. Wherefore we ought to honour them, obey them, to be willing and ready both to learn and do that which they command us, and to eschew those things which they forbid us. For this obedience pleases God, and is a most acceptable honouring of him. Take heed also that you refuse not, or grudge to do such things as they shall command you ; neither that you play the truants or run away from your teachers, masters, or other artificers, into whose house, tuition, and custody, your fathers and mothers shall commit you. For this is a great sin before God, which shall not escape unpunished.

But, especially you must avoid this most detestable kind of disobedience, which now-a-days is very common, that you entangle not yourselves with marriage without the knowledge and consent of your parents. For this is a point not only of notable disobedience, but also of great foolishness. For what is more miserable, or can trouble a man

more in this world, than a marriage evil matched and unmeetly coupled? This is that grief and punishment that daily troubles and scourges us all our lifetime, from which there is no means to escape but by death only. And it is to be feared when we go about to marry ourselves, contemning parents' authority, that God will not prosper such marriages, or give them his favour and blessing. But if you will keep God's commandments and honour your parents, then God will love you, and pour his gifts upon you most abundantly.

Now, good children, you have heard what you ought to do. I pray you be willing to perform that which your bounden duty requires of you. For St. Paul saith, that this is the first or chief commandment, having a promise annexed unto it. For herein God doth promise, that he who honours his father and mother, shall live a long life, and shall abide in his native country. And he who does not honour them, shall be driven out of his country, and shall shortly die. And surely this we prove to be true by daily experience. For when children are wanton, wild, stiff-necked, stubborn, and refuse to be ruled by their parents and schoolmasters; or do not serve their masters truly; when they will not have in reverence their preachers and curates; or do not obey the common rulers; then God scourges them, some with one punishment, some with another. And here I will not speak of those unthrifty young men who are pickers of quarrels, and in their wilfulness one slays another. But if perchance these disobedient children escape punishment in their youth, yet when they come to men's estate, and keep houses of their own, then commonly such children do not avoid this threat and indignation of God. For then many times they run into such debt, that they are compelled to forsake their native country, and to fly into sanctuary, or else to wander in strange regions, like banished men, far from their kinsfolk, acquaintance, and friends, where no man doth help them, trust them, or have pity upon them.

And many of them, whilst they go about to avoid extreme poverty, by lying, stealing, robbing, or other ill means, are cast in prison, and afterwards hanged. These and such-like pains, men do worthily suffer in their age, who in their youth disdained to follow the counsel of their parents.

Wherefore, good children, obey your parents and

magistrates; then you shall prove wise men, able to help both yourselves and others. Then God shall bless you, that you may long continue in the country, wherein you were born and bred, and dwell among your parents, brethren and sisters, friends and acquaintance, many years. Then extreme poverty shall not oppress you, whereby you should be compelled to leave your country, neither the rage nor peril of war shall drive you out from thence: so many and so great benefits God hath promised to obedient children. And there is no doubt, but that he will perform what he has promised. As we feel, by experience, that so long as we obey our parents, and suffer ourselves to be governed according to God's will, so long we are brought up in the fear of God, to our great commodity and profit. And this is the true meaning of the precept, which I pray you deeply to print into your memories, that when you shall be asked how you understand this commandment, you may answer, We ought to love and dread our Lord God, and for his sake to honour our parents, teachers, masters, and governors, to obey them, and in no wise to despise them.

The Fifth Sermon.

In the former sermon it hath been declared unto you, how you should understand the precept, in which you have learned how you must behave yourselves towards your fathers and mothers, and all common ministers in the public weal. Now followeth the fifth (sixth) commandment: "*Thou shalt not kill.*" Which teaches us how we ought to order ourselves towards each of our neighbours, that we hurt them not either in their goods, or in their life. For among all worldly goods and bodily gifts there is none more precious than health and life. Therefore God, before all other damages and hurts, chiefly forbids this, that we kill not our neighbour. And this commandment not only restrains our hands from killing with violence and force, but it forbids also all anger, envy, wrath, hatred, and malice, that we be not man-killers, either in heart, word, or deed. For the law is spiritual, as St. Paul saith, and requires of us obedience, not only in outward works, but also in the affections of the heart and inward motions and most secret senses of the same. And it is a high wisdom to look into the bottom of this commandment and rightly to understand the same.

Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ expounded this commandment his own self, lest we should err and falsely understand it, as the Jews did. For the Jews thought, that as long as they had refrained their hands from killing and slaying, so long they had kept this commandment. And although their hearts had been full of hatred, envy, and malice towards their neighbour, and with contumelious words or deeds they had given occasion of manslaughter,* yet this they counted for no sin, and their scribes and pharisees did so teach them. Therefore Christ, in the fifth of Matthew, saith, Verily I say unto you, except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ye have heard that it was said unto them of the old time, Thou shalt not kill. Whosoever killeth shall be worthy to be judged. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother is worthy to be judged.

Here you see, good children, that Christ doth as earnestly forbid hatred, anger, and envy, as he doth bloody manslaughter. For he that is angry with his neighbour, killeth his neighbour in heart and will, and breaketh this commandment of God, Thou shalt not kill. And mark well, good children, that he saith not, Thy hand shall not kill, or Thy sword, spear, or gun shall not slay. But he saith, Thou shalt not kill, that is to say, Thou, who art made of body and soul, shalt neither kill with any of thy bodily members, nor yet with thy inward mind or will, neither with word or deed.

But here, peradventure, some will say, What think you, sir, of traitors, common thieves, robbers, and murderers; ought not such to be killed? I answer, that they ought to be killed: but yet God saith, Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt keep peace with all men. Who then shall kill such malefactors? Leave punishment to me, saith God, and I will avenge. God himself will do execution upon such open transgressors of his laws. And therefore, here in this world, God hath ordained under him kings, princes, and other magistrates, and hath given them their swords to this use, that they should be his deputies in killing such offenders. And when such common governors do their office in punishing open malefactors, then they do a true honour and service to God, and are his ministers, as St. Paul saith to the Romans. The magistrate is God's officer. And when the public minister kills an open transgressor, we

* Murder.

ought to think that God kills him, forasmuch as the officer does so by the commandment and ordinance of God. Wherefore, good children, although men do ever so great wrong unto you, yet ye in no wise must kill, neither in will, word, nor deed.

For there are divers ways to commit murder. The first is when with any kind of weapon or violence we slay our neighbour, as thieves do by the highways. Also if we give any commandment or counsel that our neighbour should be slain by others, or if we spread abroad any evil bruit or slander of any man, by occasion of which he is put to death. Furthermore, we kill when either with word or deed, we may, and do not deliver him whom other men intend to kill. And when we see our neighbour in peril of life, and do not help him, but suffer him to die for hunger, to be drowned or burned. Besides this, we are man-killers, when we bear anger, hatred, and malice against our neighbour, and when with great anger and fury we rail on him, curse him, and wish vengeance to light upon him. For wheresoever anger, hatred, envy, and maliciousness reign, there is manslaughter; which, although it be not performed indeed with the hand and sword, yet it is done in heart, mind, and will. For as fire kindled with a little spark doth oftentimes great hurt and damage, and cannot easily be quenched, so when the sparks of anger, hatred, and envy, set on fire man's heart, they oftentimes provoke more hurt than ever a man thought, and sometimes they stir him to commit such offences, as in all his life he never thought upon, and for which afterwards he sorrows all the days of his life.

So that the well-spring of manslaughter is malice and envy. And therefore St. John in his epistle saith, He that hateth his brother is a man-killer; and Christ saith, He that is angry with his brother is worthy to be judged. For to be angry is to kill with the heart: wherefore, that commandment which saith, Thou shalt not kill, also forbids to be angry. Furthermore, Christ saith, He that saith to his brother, 'Raca,' that is to say, he that with voice or gesture showeth any token of an angry heart, is worthy the sessions; but he that saith, 'Thou fool,' is worthy the fire of hell. In these sentences, our master Christ teaches us that in words is manslaughter committed, when we utter the poison of our heart with any such words whereby the venom of our heart is perceived. But when we burst out into such railing, slanderous, and contumelious words

against any man, that he may lose thereby his estimation or good name, then we are more heinous murderers. And here also Christ teaches us how grievously we shall be punished both in this life and the life to come, if we despise this commandment of God. For he not only says, he that killeth, but he also that is angry with his brother, is worthy of judgment. That is to say, is guilty before God of so great a crime, that he has deserved to be arrested, to be drawn violently unto the place of judgment, and there openly to be accused, and arraigned of the same. But he, that with a voice or gesture utters the malice of his heart, is worthy the sessions; that is to say, he has committed so grievous an offence in the sight of God, that it is not now necessary to impannel a quest* to inquire whether he has deserved punishment or no, forasmuch as his offence is manifest; but the greatness of the sin has only need of a session or a number of judges, to determine how grievously such an offender ought to be punished.

But he who, inflamed with anger, calls his neighbour by such opprobrious words that his estimation and good name are hurt and decayed, he is worthy of hell fire; that is to say, he hath sinned so heinously, that he hath deserved torments, both in this world and in another world, except he repent in time, and obtain pardon by the passion of Christ. But, most of all, killing with the hand, and effusion of blood, shall be punished with most grievous pains, both in this life and in the life to come. As our Lord God declared to Noah, saying, I will require your blood of the hand of all beasts, and of the hands of man. For whosoever sheddeth man's blood, his blood shall be shed again. And in case the man-killer escape man's hands, and punishment of the common officer, or if they that have God's sword in their hands, are negligent in doing their office, or will be blinded with affections, and corrupted with money, yet God will not let manslaughter escape unpunished. For he hath said that he himself will inquire of blood-shedding, and sit in judgment upon man-killers. As it is plainly declared unto us by the horrible example of Cain, who killed his brother Abel.

For not only in this life God did so sorely punish him, that his conscience was vexed with such unquietness and horrible fear, that all his body shook and trembled most pitifully, and he could abide or rest in no place, but like a

* A jury.

banished man or runagate, wandered every where, but also now after this life, he is cursed of God, and damned for ever. This fearful pain, good children, ought to warn us to be diligent in keeping this commandment, that we kill not, neither in will, word, nor deed; but contrariwise endeavour ourselves to practise Christ's lessons, who hath taught us gentleness, mildness, long sufferance, and patience. For he saith, Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Wherefore, good children, mark earnestly what God here commandeth. Ye shall not, saith he, be angry, but love your enemies, ye shall not slander or backbite others, but speak well even of those that hate you, according to the commandment of Christ. If a man strike thee on one cheek, resist not, but whosoever shall give thee a blow on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And whosoever will compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain. Do good to them that hate you, pray for them that hurt and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. All these are the words of Christ. And if we have done any man wrong, or provoked our neighbour to anger, then with great diligence we ought to labour that in all haste and speed we may be reconciled. For Christ saith, If thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath any thing against thee, leave there thine offering before the altar, go thy way, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gifts. Oblations and sacrifices were in the old testament a very commendable and high kind of worshipping God, forasmuch as he himself did appoint and command them. And yet Christ here teaches, that God is better honoured with keeping his commandments, than with our offerings. And to be reconciled to our neighbour is a sacrifice more acceptable unto him, than to offer oblations.

Furthermore, the keeping of these commandments helps much to maintain the tranquillity, peace, and quietness of the commonwealth. For Christ saith, Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him: that is to say, we must refrain ourselves from discord, variance, hatred, and contention, and as much as lieth in us seek peace, concord, and quietness, lest we be cast into prison, from whence we shall not be delivered, except we pay the utmost farthing. And in these civil and worldly

courts, although our cause be good and rightful, yet it is possible, that judgment may be given against us. And in case that at the length we have sentence on our side, yet the suit thereof shall be so chargeable unto us, that we shall, for the most part, spend more money in waging of the law, than we shall gain by the sentence. Wherefore there is nothing better or more profitable than to seek for concord and peace, as much as is possible ; and as it is our part to live in peace with all men, so it is our duty also to make them at one who are at variance. For Christ saith, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Wherefore, good children, print well in your remembrance that God hath commanded, Thou shalt not kill, and that we cannot offer a more acceptable sacrifice to God than to keep his commandments. Make yourselves strong, therefore, patiently to suffer all things, revenge not yourselves, but leave all punishment to God, and he will revenge your quarrels. Be not inflamed with anger, hatred, or envy against your neighbour; do no wrong to him; bear with his weakness and forbear him ; hurt him not, but rather defend him from hurt ; sow and nourish unity, peace, and friendship, between all men; make agreements and love-days between them that are fallen at discord; avoid all occasions of anger or displeasure, as bragging, boasting, reviling, taunting, scorning, dicing, banqueting, riot, and such like offences. And contrariwise, love your neighbour, do good to all men, as far as your ability will serve you, speak well of every body, and labour with all your power to save the life of your neighbour. For this is the duty of all godly men, to preserve and defend their neighbour, friendly to admonish him of his faults, to instruct him, and to comfort him. For we are bound to help our neighbour in his necessity, to lend him money, to give to him when he asketh, to refresh his hunger with meat and drink, to clothe his nakedness, to receive into our house the harbourless, to comfort him when he is sick. For all these offices and effects of true humanity, love, and charity, God commanded when he said, Thou shalt not kill. And this is the true meaning of the precept. Wherefore, good children, mark it well, and when ye be asked, How understand you this commandment? you shall answer, We ought to love and dread our Lord God above all things, so that for his sake we hurt not our neighbour,

in his name, goods, cattle, life, or body; but aid, comfort, and succour him in all necessities, troubles, and afflictions.

The Sixth Sermon.

In the last sermon you were taught how we should behave ourselves toward our neighbour, that we kill him not, neither in will, word, nor deed, nor hurt him in his goods or body. Now a man, if he be a man indeed, and no monster, next after his own body, most dearly loves his wife; wherefore next follows the sixth (seventh) commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery;* which teaches how we should order ourselves towards our wives, that we should love them, not forsake them, or break the promise of wedlock with them, but lovingly keep them company. Also that we should not lust after another man's wife, neither with fair words or gifts entice her away from her husband, but labour with all diligence, that women both married and unmarried may keep their chastity undefiled. For God himself did institute and ordain marriage, and did hallow it with his own blessing. Wherefore we may be sure that this state of life pleaseth God, and that it is his will to have it kept without pollution or dishonesty. For God after that he had made Adam said thus, It is not good that Adam should be alone, let us make for him an help. And when Adam was asleep, the Lord took one of his ribs, and made a woman of the rib which he had taken from Adam. And he brought her to Adam, and Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined with his wife, and they shall be twain in one flesh. And the Lord God blessed them, saying, Grow and increase, and replenish the earth, and till it.

By this you may learn, good children, that God himself did institute marriage with his own word. Wherefore there is no doubt but that this kind of life is holy, and doth highly please God.—Be diligent, therefore, to learn in time some craft, way, or science, whereby you may keep your house and get your living honestly, both for yourselves, your wives, and your children.

Now, as marriage is a kind of life so holy, godly, and honest, and it pertains so much to the profit of the commonwealth, that the promise therein made should be faithfully observed; therefore God with this commandment, as with a strong bulwark or fortress, hath defended wedlock, saying, Thou shalt be no wedlock breaker. And to the intent we

the better understand what our Lord God meant by this commandment, Christ himself expounded it, saying, Ye have heard how it was said to them of the old law, Thou shalt commit no adultery. But I say unto you, He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart. We must abstain also from all wanton communication, all unclean affections and thoughts. Wherefore this commandment, Thou shalt commit no adultery, is as much as to say, Thou shalt not offend, neither in act, nor in unclean words, nor in looks, winks, becks, or other unhonest gestures and signs, neither in affection and secret motion of thy heart.

But take heed, good children, that ye err not with the ungodly, wicked persons, but know ye for a surety that all kinds of uncleanness, by whatsoever name or title it be called, is sin, and highly displeases God. And St. Paul saith, in express words, Fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. For this know for a surety, that no whoremonger, or unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for such things cometh the wrath of God upon disobedient children.

Secondly, If you will keep this commandment, you must abstain from all filthy words and unclean communication, you must not craftily go about with flattery and loving words to deceive the simplicity of young persons, you must not with fair promises or gifts entice them to folly—but as much as is possible, you shall avoid all wanton looks and unchaste gestures, too much niceness in trimming and decking your bodies, and apparelling them too gorgeously, and all kinds of crafty enticements which lovers use to please the eyes and minds of their paramours, whereby they may allure them.

Thirdly, You must eschew all unclean minds and thoughts. For although the world doth neither see nor punish the sins of our thoughts, yet God, who searcheth men's hearts and reins, both sees and punishes them. Therefore Christ saith, He that seeth a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery in his heart. You must also diligently avoid all occasions by which such unlawful lusts are provoked, as surfeiting, drunkenness, idleness, wanton dancing, and such like.

For Christ in this sermon saith, If thy right eye give

thee an occasion to sin, pull it out and cast it from thee: for it is better that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell. Much more then if surfeiting, banqueting, or such other like, give you occasion of sin, you ought diligently to eschew them, lest you fall into so perilous a danger.

Fourthly, You ought not only to keep your own bodies and souls chaste, and pure, but also you must take heed that you give no occasion, aid, or counsel, to any others, but as much as lieth in you, you shall study that honest and chaste living may be observed of all. For these things both please God and are very profitable to every commonwealth. You shall therefore understand this commandment after this sort, that you abstain from all uncleanness, both in heart, word, and deed; that you avoid all evil occasion, both by yourselves and by others, that we may all lead a godly, chaste, and pure life, that the bond or knot of wedlock may not be broken or loosed. Whereby the commonwealth may have plenty of good and virtuous children, who may be able, in time to come, either to be preachers and ministers of God's most holy word, or to bear common office in the administration of the commonwealth, to the glory of God and profit of their neighbour. Wherefore, good children, when you shall be demanded, How understand you this commandment? ye shall answer, We ought above all things to love and dread our Lord God, and for his sake to live chastely in will, word, and deed, and every man is bound to love and cherish his wife.

The Seventh Sermon.

You have heard in the exposition of the last commandment, how we should behave ourselves towards our own wives and our neighbours' wives also: by which commandment, as God hath fortified wedlock, that no man shall besiege or assault it, so by the virtue and strength of this commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, he defends our neighbour's goods and riches, whereby he lives himself, his wife, children, and family. For this precept teaches us how we should order ourselves towards our neighbour's goods and cattle, that by fraud and stealth we convey nothing from him, that by violence or extortion we take nothing from him; but study to defend and increase his riches, with as good a will as we would do our own.

And here note, good children, that this word, theft, not only signifies open robbery, extortions, and manifest pillage, but also all manner of crafts and subtle ways, by which we convey our neighbour's goods from him, contrary to his knowledge or will, although the guile have ever so fair a colour of virtue and honesty. And to the intent you may the better understand this, I shall declare it unto you by certain examples.

And first, I will begin with magistrates or common officers. God hath commanded us to pay to princes and governors of the commonwealth, rents, services, tributes, customs, toll, subsidies, pensions, and other yearly revenues, whereby they may be more able to sustain and bear the charges of the common administration, and also to punish them that are evil, and to defend those that be good. But when the magistrates overcharge their subjects, and exact more of them than is needful to the maintenance of the common charges, and so impoverish and oppress those whom they ought to save and defend from all injury and wrong, then this sore exaction is a notable and heinous kind of theft in the sight of God.

Likewise, it is when they wring money out of their subjects' hands unjustly and against their wills. And tributes or subsidies, if they take none but such only as of right are due unto them, yet if they bestow not the same as they ought to do, but wastefully spend that money which was gathered for the maintenance of the common charges, and consume it in riot and unlawful pleasures, then they commit theft before God. Also God shall judge them thieves, when for covetousness they leave such things undone which are necessary to be done for the common profit. As when they appoint not good and proper men to be rulers under them, bishops, parsons, curates, and schoolmasters, because they grudge to give them an honest and sufficient living, but will take out of the common sort to minister such high offices, those that will serve for least money. And rulers of cities are thieves when they suffer the necessary buildings of the city, as churches, guildhalls, the town walls, common bridges, conduits, or such like, to decay or fall to ruin. For so, through their negligence or covetousness, the common money is not employed to such uses, for the which it was gathered.

Also bishops, pastors, preachers, and curates, are thieves, when for men's favour, and their own lucre, they hide the

truth of God's word, and teach lies and their own dreams, and sell all things for money. As of late time, here in England, many of them had great gains by dirges, services to sing for souls, trentals, pilgrimages, pardons, and such-like deceits. This kind of deceit, in uttering false ware for good, is theft before God; for men thereby are deceived, who would give no money at all for such merchandise, if they were taught and warned of their abuses.

Likewise, lawyers, advocates, sergeants, attornies, and proctors, are thieves before God, when they for their own gains do counsel a man to wage the law, making him to believe that his matter is good, when indeed they think it naught. Or, when for money they will so craftily handle or plead a matter, that they with their shifts and colours will purposely hide the truth, and make a good cause to seem bad, and a bad cause to appear good; wherewith they shall so deceive the judge, that they will cause him unjustly to give sentence on their side. And the judge himself is a thief before God, when he for bribes, or any corruption, wittingly and willingly gives wrong judgment; for he takes from the party that has the good cause, his just title and interest, and gives it to the other party that has no right to it at all. And this is also no small theft, when men craftily defraud the true heirs of their inheritance, or forge false testaments, and will not bring to light the true will, but hide and suppress it.

Furthermore, merchantmen, brokers, chapmen, merchants, factors, are thieves when they require unreasonable gains in selling of their merchandise, or when they utter corrupt and naughty ware for good; when they deceive their neighbour with false weight and measure; when with forged letters and feigned news they persuade others to be hasty to sell that kind of ware good cheap, which they know will be dear shortly after; or else, by such-like craft, entice men to buy of them great plenty of that kind of merchandise, of the which they know that the price will shortly after decay; or when, with their lies and perjuries, they cause a man to give more money for any stuff than he would have done, if he had known that they had lied. Also, when the rich merchantmen and usurers have the heads of the poor handicraftsmen so bound under their girdles, that the poor men of necessity are compelled to bring their ware to them, and when the handicraftsmen do come to them and offer their stuff, then they feign that they have no need

of such wares at that time, and by such means compel them to sell their wares better cheap than they may be able to afford them, not regarding what great loss their poor neighbour doth suffer thereby. Also, when by forestalling, regrating, agreements in halls to raise the price of things, engrossing of merchandise, when one man or one company gets all in their own hands, so that no man may have gain but they only—when by these or such-like deceits, they compel the poor to buy at their own price such wares as they must need have, then they are arrant thieves before God; for by such frauds they beguile their poor neighbours, and pillage them of their money against their wills. The handicraftsmen and daily labourers are also thieves, when they do not apply to their work diligently and faithfully, but sell counterfeited and slightly wrought wares for substantial stuff, or require more for their labour and pains than they have deserved.

Likewise, husbandmen in the country, to whom lords and gentlemen let their land to farm, to the intent that they should plough and till it, that thereby the commonwealth may have plenty of corn, and dearth may be avoided; if they be negligent or slothful in ploughing the ground, or sell their corn, cattle, or other victual, at unreasonable prices to enrich themselves thereby, they are very thieves before the face of God. For kings, lords, and gentlemen, do not give to their farmers the propriety or inheritance of their lands, but only for certain rents and services let their ground out by lease, for this intent and purpose, that the farmers should till the same. And the farmer or husbandman to whom such lease is made, is nothing else but a servant appointed by the lord so to occupy his ground, that thereby the common people may be fed and nourished. Now, therefore, if he do not diligently plough and sow the ground as he is appointed, or else, if he set so excessive a price upon his corn, that the multitude, whom his duty is to feed, is not able to buy it, then he is guilty of theft before God. For if farmers and husbandmen were so owners of their farms and lands, that they might choose whether they would plough them or no, then they should neither be able to pay their rent due unto their landlords, and the common people should perhaps die for hunger.

Likewise, this commandment is to be understood of household servants, whether they are men or women, apprentices, journeymen, or hired labourers. For all these

receive wages for this intent that they should labour and work for their masters' profit, and help their masters in true getting and faithful keeping of their goods to the maintenance of their household. But when such servants are untrusty, negligent, or slothful in doing their duty, when they wastefully spend or consume their masters' goods, when they require greater wages than they are worthy to have, when they start or run from their masters, or tarry not so long as they were bound by their covenant; then they break this commandment, Thou shalt not steal; forasmuch as they withdraw from their masters that profit which of duty they owe unto them, and do as much as lieth in them to impoverish and undo their masters.

And to be short, they that pay not to their servants or workmen their wages in due time, according to their covenant; they who will not, at the day appointed, restore that money which they have borrowed; they who can and will not pay their debts, for their own lucre; they that do not render things which they have found, as far as they can come to knowledge of the true owners; they that do not give again such things as are committed to their custody for a time; and generally all they that hawk and hunt for other men's goods against the will of the owners, or hurt them in any part of the same, or else, if they seek not their neighbour's profit as they ought to do; all these, I say, are thieves before God, although the world does not so judge them, nor punish them for the same. Hereby you may perceive, good children, how great misery reigns in this wretched world, and that men swim, as it were, in a flood of sin. For the world is full of privy thieves; and there is hardly any state or kind of life, from the highest to the lowest, of which there are not many, that have broken this commandment. And yet we count it a villany to be called a thief, and not without good cause. For thieves are punished with most shameful death, hanging on the gallows or gibbet; and although they escape hanging in this world, yet many times God punishes them, so that they live wretchedly all their lifetime; for commonly evil-gotten goods are ill spent, and the third heir doth scarcely enjoy them.

And when such untrusty and slothful servants, as I have heretofore spoken of, shall keep house of their own, then God scourges them with the same rod, with the which they whipped others. For he sends them unfaithful and

negligent servants, who run away from them, and serve them as they were wont to serve others. Wherefore, good children, keep well this commandment. Abstain from all kinds of theft; steal nothing from any man; hurt nobody; give and render to every man that which is due unto him, according to his degree, state, and calling. And when you are trusted with other men's goods, handle them faithfully. You ought to be much better now, than when we were under the bishop of Rome, forasmuch as we have now received the gospel, and have newly professed the pure truth of God's word. Therefore, if now we are not better than we were before, surely God will more grievously punish us than he did before, when we were in ignorance. For the Lord saith in the gospel, The servant, that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.

Now, good children, ye have heard how this commandment forbids you to hurt your neighbour, either in act, word, or thought. It commands you neither privily nor openly, to steal or take away another man's goods against his will; it wills you to commit no theft in words, that is to say, to beware, that neither with lies, swearing, forswearing, nor with flattery, fair words, or crafty communication, we defraud, circumvent, or beguile our neighbour, neither by threatening we cause him to depart from any portion of his goods, or any other way annoy him.

Also it prohibits us to commit theft in heart or thought, which we do, when through the counsel of covetousness we study, compass, and imagine how we may deceive our neighbour, and by hook or by crook get that which we covet to have. But contrariwise, this commandment charges us to give and tender to every man that which is due unto him, willingly to serve and profit all men, to defend our neighbour from all manner of hurt, loss, and damage, as much as it shall lie in us; so to order our words and communication, that thereby, as much as shall be possible, we may help and comfort our neighbour, heartily love and favour all men, and envy no man. Also, this precept wills us to be so far absent from taking away another man's goods, that it bids us to give part of our own riches to them that lack and desire it, according to the commandment of Christ, who said, Give to every man that doth ask thee. And again he saith, Give alms, and all things shall be clean unto you.

And in another place, That which you do to one of the least of mine, saith Christ, that you do to me.

Wherefore, good children, when you shall be demanded, How understand you the seventh (eighth) commandment? you shall answer, We ought to fear and love our Lord God above all things, and for his sake willingly abstain from our neighbour's goods and cattle, and take nothing from him, but to help him in his need, and to defend and augment his riches and commodities.

The Eighth Sermon.

You have heard how you ought to understand the precept by which ye have learned, that by no means we should take away our neighbour's goods against his will. And when he commits any thing to our custody, either willingly or constrained by necessity, then it is our duty to keep and save the same, as we would do in case it were our own. And forasmuch as our riches stand not only in possession of lands, tenements, cattle, or money, but also in our good name, fame, and estimation, which far surpass all gold, silver, and precious stones, therefore follows this commandment: *Thou shalt bear no false witness against thy neighbour.* For this commandment teaches us how we should behave ourselves in defending our neighbour's good name, that we dishonour him not with lies, false accusations, or witness-bearing, that we slander him not, but study to defend, increase, and maintain his good name and fame, even so as we would wish other men to do toward us.

And here you shall diligently mark and bear away how excellent a treasure it is to have a good name: for Solomon saith, A good name is better than much riches, and more precious than balm or other strange ointments. And forasmuch as God so earnestly forbids other men to hurt our good report and estimation, which men have conceived of us, it must needs follow, that much more he forbids us to do that hurt to ourselves, which he charges others not once to offer unto us, but he requires of us that we, with all diligence, should study to get us a good name, and to keep the same unspotted and undefiled. This we shall do, if we apply our minds to true virtue and unfeigned religion, that our life may be found faultless, and men may have no matter against us wherewith they may worthily charge us. For it is not sufficient only to abstain from sin, but we

must also avoid all occasion of the same, and, as St. Paul counsels us, we must refrain from all outward appearance of evil. Wherefore, good children, live virtuously, keep God's commandments, obey your parents and elders, that you may be well spoken of, and be taken for honest persons; for this not only pleases God, but also is very profitable for you; for this is the highway that shall bring you to riches, honour, and promotion, to have a good report and credit among your neighbours. And in nowise follow the example of some light and shameless unthrifts, who care not what men say of them, and pass not, if all men speak evil by them; for they are ashamed of no kind of mischief. But such God will punish, and commonly they shall have an evil end.

But ye, good children, shall endeavour to preserve both your own good name, and your neighbours' also, and to beware that ye bear no false witness against other men, that is to say, that ye defame not them, or impair their good name by your lies and slanders.

For the word, 'witness,' in this place, betokens all that which is spoken of our neighbours, when they go to law, or contend about any matter. As when one arrests another, and saith, I lent this fellow so much money, and now he denies the same; then if any third person come in and say, I was present, and saw when this man lent him this sum of money, whereas he saw no such thing in deed, then this false witness does to his neighbour double injury. For, first, he causes that his neighbour is compelled to pay that money which he never borrowed; secondly, he causes him to lose his good name and credit, and to be called a shameless liar; insomuch that every man will point at him, when he goes in the streets, and say, Lo, yonder goeth that unfaithful person, who borrowed money of his neighbour and denied the same. The which, when it happens, the party of whom this evil report is spread is undone in this world, and suffers greater damage by the loss of his name, than if he lost all his riches.

Wherefore, it is not without a cause that God so earnestly forbids us to bear false witness. For, as by true witness-bearing, discord, strife, and contention are ended, both in the law and out of the law, so by false testimonies, strife, discord, and variance are sown and scattered, and wrong thereby greatly maintained. Wherefore God in this commandment forbids us with lies to slander our

neighbour, that we give no occasion to hatred, discord, or debate, but that we study to speak the truth, and as much as it shall lie in us, to reconcile men together; for this is an excellent virtue, which highly pleases God. For Christ saith in the gospel, Blessed are they that make peace, for they shall be called the children of God.

Wherefore, good children, beware chiefly that you be no liars, nor false witness bearers, but for any occasion you spare not to speak the truth at all times and places, and especially when you are brought for witnesses into common courts or open judgments. For God himself hath ordained laws, courts, and officers, to defend the good and to punish the evil; without which there can be no peace or quietness in this world. They are the succour and sanctuary of fatherless and motherless children, of widows, and of all oppressed persons. And he, that should go about to overturn this common refuge of all persons that suffer wrong, must needs sin against the ordinance of God, and grievously hurt his neighbour. But no man perverts and overturns justice, courts, and judgments more than a false witness: wherefore this is a very heinous sin before God.—He maintaineth wrong and continueth hatred, debate, and contention, of which follow brawling, fighting, and oftentimes murder. The which heinous sins God will not suffer to escape unscourged, but horribly will punish. Wherefore let every man avoid false witness bearing, as they would fire, the plague, or poison.

By this commandment also God withdraws us from all evil suspicions, that we think no evil of our neighbour, neither expound his words or deeds to the worst; that we suspect him not without a cause, nor utter to others our suspicions conceived against any man, as long as we know not certainly the truth. For those, who, grounding themselves upon suspicions, raise evil tales or untrue reports against their neighbour, bear false witness against him, and do more hurt than open liars; for they that lie openly, or that in the face of the court bear false witness against a man, may be accused and punished for their offence; but men cannot so easily avoid the venom of those persons, who secretly, by poisoned words, or other means, cause their neighbours to be suspected. Wherefore, utterly avoid this vice, and be not suspicious of your neighbours, taking all that you hear or see in them to the worst, but rather to the best.

For this is the nature and property of christian charity; as St. Paul saith, Charity thinketh none evil. And for the better understanding of this commandment, good children, mark well this, that by this commandment are forbidden all speakings and communication, which is against charity, to the hinderance of our neighbour. For whatsoever we talk against charity is sin, although we speak nothing but the truth. Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ saith, Men shall make an account of every idle word. Now if we must make a reckoning of idle words, much more then we shall reckon for our slanderous words against our neighbours; which sin, although it reign in the world too commonly, yet it is a horrible and heinous offence, whereof many evils and harms, but no good doth arise.

For when men's sins are published and spread abroad, many thereby take occasion of sin, and think thus, If this and that man have done this thing, why may not I do it also, seeing it is a fault commonly practised in the world? Moreover, when we use thus rashly to slander men, it chanceth oftentimes, that the parties which are slandered are made thereby past shame, unrepentant, and more obstinate to continue in their wicked life. Whereas if they were gently, secretly, and friendly admonished, they might be won and brought to the right way again. Wherefore, make not the worst of men's faults, neither be desirous to tell them abroad, although you know the things to be true. But keep the rule of Christ, which saith, If thy brother trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he hear thee, thou hast won thy brother, &c. (Matt. xviii.) This is the best and the most honest way to entreat sinners, and to handle other men's faults. And he that will not use this way, let him hold his tongue; for backbiting and ill-report do more hurt than good. And it is not enough for us to refrain our own tongue from evil reports, but we must also take heed that we give no occasion to others so to do; that is to say, we must neither maintain, rejoice, nor comfort them that speak evil of their neighbours, but both with our countenance, words, and deeds, we must show unto them that we do not like such communication, and so stop the mouths of such backbiters.

Now to make a brief rehearsal of such things as have been spoken heretofore. You shall understand, good children, that by this commandment are forbidden all lies,

frauds, and all communication, whereby our neighbour's name may be hurt, or by which strife and contention may be provoked or continued, whether it be in courts of law, or out of courts. Hereby also we are commanded not to be suspicious, nor to expound our neighbours' words or deeds to the worst, nor maliciously to blow abroad their faults, or in telling of them to make them worse than they are in deed; but we ought always to set our minds on such things as pertain to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbour; and in all places to speak well and charitably of every man. We must also maintain unity, peace, and concord, take all things to the best, bear with our neighbour's frailty, and hide his faults, when we cannot amend them. This is the true meaning of this precept. Wherefore, good children, when you shall be demanded, How understand you this commandment? you shall answer, We ought to fear and love our Lord God above all things, and for his sake to abstain from all lying, backbiting, slandering, and ill reporting, by which our neighbour's good name, fame, and credit may be impeached or decayed, and rather excuse, hide, or gently to interpret another man's fault, than maliciously make the worst of the same, and with the loud trump of our tongue to blast it abroad, to the knowledge of all the town or place wherein we dwell.

The Ninth Sermon.

Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's house, wife, man-servant, woman-servant, ox, ass, nor any thing that is his.

The ninth and tenth commandments, good children, are as it were, brief commentaries and expositions of the other commandments, that were spoken of before. For they declare unto us, that it is not enough to keep the former commandments in outward works, and not to hurt our neighbour, either in his body, wife, goods, fame, name, or estimation; but they declare also, that we ought not to covet or desire any thing that is our neighbour's. And they teach us also, that evil lusts and carnal desires, which lurk in the secret corners of our hearts, are sins, for which we should be for ever damned, if God should render unto us after his justice, and not after his mercy. Wherefore, good children, you shall here learn that evil lusts and appetites, which come unto us, even from our first father

Adam, are sins, and that no man or woman, no, not infants, live without such lusts and appetites. For the which cause all men are sinners, and there is not one man innocent before God; according to the saying of St. Paul, All men have sinned, and have need of the glory of God. To which agrees the prophet David, saying, All men and women have erred out of the right way; there is none that doeth good, no not one. For this we feel in ourselves and prove by experience, that naturally we are full of evil desires and lusts. For we delight in things that are pleasant to the flesh, and abhor all things that are unpleasing to the same.

And these appetites and desires we may perceive to be even in infants, which lie in their cradle. For when such young babes do not lie softly, or are grieved with thirst, hunger, or cold, they cry impatiently. Likewise when we show them any pleasant thing to their eyes, and suddenly again take it from them, we see them weep. And these are plain and evident tokens, that infants newly born are given to their own wills and appetites, and are sinners, forasmuch as they transgress this commandment, Thou shalt not desire. We must not in this case judge after our reason, but according to the word of God, which evidently declares unto us, that concupiscence is sin. For if we were indeed clean, faultless, and innocent, then our nature would not so vehemently seek for those things which are pleasant to our appetites, but would be content with that which God should send unto us; and whatsoever thing did please God, that also would please us.

Moreover, we should not so much desire to avoid such things, as be displeasing to the flesh, as we should desire to avoid those things that are forbidden by God's law. Also we should be more willing to suffer all kinds of afflictions, pains, and miseries, if it were God's will that we should so do, than contrary to his will to hawk and hunt for pleasures, to seek to live idly, to hoard up riches, purchase lands or other commodities. But now we feel in ourselves, that even in our tender age, and in our cradles also, we are contrary minded. For we begin to covet and lust for pleasant things, long before we know whether God will give them unto us or no. Also we abhor and are weary of unpleasant things, long before we know whether it be God's will that we should be relieved of the same or no. Yea, although we know God's will ever so well, yet

we long and lust for the contrary. And this is surely a great offence. For God's will ought to be fulfilled, and not ours, as we desire in the Lord's Prayer. And to know this, good children, is a point of high wisdom, to which every man does not attain. For the apostle Paul confesses that he had not known this sin, if the law had not given him warning of it. For he saith, I had not known concupiscence, if the law had not said, Thou shalt not desire or lust.

Wherefore, good children, lock up this lesson in the coffer of your memories, by which you shall learn truly to fear God. For we ought not only to dread God, when by outward act or work we break his laws, but also as often as we feel in us ill lusts and carnal desires. And although these lusts do for a time, as it were, sleep in us, and do not stir or move us, yet, notwithstanding their quiet rest, we ought to know that they lie hid in the privy corners of our hearts, and for all their slumbering they are sins before God. For if God had not taken them for sins, then he would not have forbidden them by this commandment, Thou shalt not long or lust. For as St. Paul saith, The law was not given to the just man, nor forbids any thing but sin only. Wherefore, good children, forasmuch as we know that concupiscence, lust, or longing, is sin, we ought to avoid and bridle it, as much as we may, by God's grace. And it is our part chiefly to take heed, that we consent not to the request of our evil lusts, nor fulfil in outward act the desires of the flesh. And that you may the better attain to the understanding of this commandment, I will declare unto you the other words of this commandment, Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's house.

Where you shall note that this word 'house,' doth not only signify the house, wherein men do dwell, but it betokens all the whole household, and the whole state of the householder, and all things that belong unto him. Sometimes it is taken for a stock or kindred. Wherefore this is the perfect sense of this commandment. When thy neighbour is a nobleman born, and has goodly manors, great cupboards of plate, costly hangings of cloth of arras, great plenty of riches, and abundance of all things which appertain to such a household, then thou shalt not desire his house, that is to say, thou shalt in no wise wish that he might lose any of these things, to the intent that thou mightest have them. And covetousness or worldly

desire ought not so to ravish thy mind, that thou wouldest be in the state of life that he is in, but let that kind of living please thee whereunto it has pleased God to call thee. Wherefore, good children, learn without book, I pray you, this short lesson, and put it daily in execution, COVET not, nor long for a more noble or wealthy state than God hath already given unto you. But let every man be content with his progeny, office, calling, state, and degree; for so ye shall please God, and obey his will.

Furthermore they break this commandment, that are desirous to put their neighbour out of his house or land, to the intent that they may have the same.

Also thou offendest herein, when thou art glad to see thy neighbour fall into decay, and in his need dost offer to lend him money, to the intent that he may run so far in thy debt, that at length he shall be compelled to offer to thee his inheritance to be sold. Now in this case, if thou buyest the same, thou dost sin, yea, although thou pay as much money as the land is worth. For thou oughtest to love thy neighbour as thine own self, and to wish unto him as good success and great prosperity, as thou wouldest to thyself. Now thou wouldest not gladly be put from thine own patrimony. Thou wouldest not be oppressed with debt or poverty, therefore, thou mayest not wish or do to thy neighbour that thou wouldest not other men should do to thee. Therefore thou mayest not hawk or hunt for his patrimony; thou mayest make no trains to bring him into thy snare, and to cause him to sell the same, but thou oughtest rather to help thy neighbour, both with thy counsel and with thy money, to keep still his inheritance, and not to defraud his heirs or posterity, of those lands which his ancestors, by long succession, have left to him and his heirs.

Now, good children, you have heard the true meaning of this precept. And because it teaches you how to order your heart, I pray you learn it by heart, that when you be demanded, How understand you this commandment? you may answer, We ought to fear and love our Lord God above all things, and for his sake so to chastise our eyes and lusts, that we desire not our neighbour's house nor other thing belonging unto him, that we put him not from his possessions or goods, but help him as much as shall lie in us, to retain and keep his lands, goods, and all that is his.

The Tenth Sermon.

Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor woman-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

I will not be long, good children, in declaring unto you the tenth commandment, partly because the words and sense of the same are so plain, that they need no long declaration; partly because I have already expounded the same in the former sermon. For these two last commandments are so coupled together, that he who understands the one perfectly, shall easily perceive the other; for they both have one purpose and intent, to cleanse the inward man, and to purge the heart from all ill affections and lusts. But whereas the former commandment forbids us, that we should not wish to succeed our neighbour in his lands, honours, or dignities, a carnal man would, peradventure, reason on this fashion: I grant, indeed, that I am forbidden to covet all my neighbour's lands or goods, but yet I may desire and entice from him one servant, I may convey from him an ox, ass, or a horse. For he has great plenty of all these things, and may spare one or two of them without any hinderance or great loss. And that which does him but small service by reason of his great abundance, would do me much pleasure, and greatly relieve my necessity. To this objection God himself answers in this last commandment, saying, Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife, servant-maid, ox, or ass; no, thou shalt desire nothing that is thy neighbour's. For God is the maker of all things, and Lord of all creatures, and he gives them to whom it pleases him. Wherefore, if he have given any thing to thy neighbour which he hath not sent to thee, envy not thy neighbour therefore, nor go about to convey it from him, but think this: if it were God's pleasure that I should possess such a thing, or if he knew that it were for my good to have it, he would have sent it to me as well as to my neighbour. For surely, good children, those ravening wolves that are ever thirsting after other men's goods, lack the benediction of God, and therefore they cannot long prosper, no, not in this world. For either they bring nothing to pass with all their gaping, gleaning, and carefulness, or if they obtain their purpose, yet, verily, all things accounted, their loss is greater than their gains.

For in this world they lose the favour both of God and man. They lose their good name and fame, and are called of every man, extortioners, bribers, pollers and pillers, devourers of widows' houses, and oppressors of fatherless and motherless children. And what a gaining is this, I pray you, by purchasing of a little land here in this life, to purchase therewithal everlasting damnation in hell? What profits it a man, saith Christ, if he shall win all the world, and lose his own soul?

What did David win, when he lusted after the wife of Uriah, and had his pleasure? Did not God therefore so punish him, that he himself lost his own wives?

What did it profit Ahab that he slew Naboth, and took possession of his vineyard? Verily, God punished him therefore so that he caused him to be slain in the next battle that he went unto, and took the kingdom from all his succession, and destroyed all his lineage, and left not one man alive; and besides all this, the dogs licked Ahab's blood in the same place where he caused Naboth to be slain.

What gained Judas, when he sold our Lord Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver? Verily, he was punished of God therefore, and was so tormented with the horrible fear of conscience, that he ran to the halter for succour, and hanged himself therewith; as he ended the miseries of this life, so he began the pains of the other life.

Likewise, God even now-a-days doth punish these glyering* kites, that seek their prey in every place; for commonly, either they are deceived of their expectation for all their gaping and prying, or if they obtain their prey, they purchase to themselves therewith great misfortune and evil ends. Wherefore, good children, let this commandment deeply sink into your hearts, and consider well that it is no man, nor creature, but God himself, that saith unto you, Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife, his man-servant, woman-servant, ox, ass, or any other thing that is his. For to desire these things is a very heinous sin, and God will not suffer it to escape unpunished. And although men now-a-days take it but for a trifle, when a man has a true and diligent servant, to entice him away by all crafts and means, yet surely God will punish the same sharply. For as they entice their neighbour's servants from them, so God suffers other men to

* Fierce, ravenous.

allure their servants away likewise. And moreover this inconvenience comes hereby, that when servants perceive men to sue for them, they wax so haughty and stubborn, that they will be content with no mean wages, and are so proud that they regard not their masters, nor stand in awe of them, but whensoever their old masters displease them, by-and-by, they will seek for a new. And when they are not content with their old wages, they desire more: and this complaint of servants is now-a-days almost in every man's mouth, and yet it is not redressed, because it is the just judgment of God, wherewith he scourges them that allure their neighbour's servants from them.

And God not only punishes such as entice other men's servants from them, but also those that go about to get any other part of their neighbours' goods or cattle. For if thou take thy neighbour's house over his head, or put him out of his house by any crafty conveyance, then many times God takes vengeance, with sickness or loss of thy goods. If thou convey away his cattle, commonly they prosper not, but die of some kind of murrain. And whatsoever we thus purchase and possess contrary to God's commandment, it lacketh the blessing of God, wherefore it cannot long endure or prosper.

Therefore, I pray you, good children, frame your affections and lives according to this rule. Be content that every man may enjoy and keep to himself that which God has given him. When God's pleasure shall so be, he will also send to you that which you desire. And He is able so to give it you, that your neighbour thereby shall suffer no loss or damage. Covet not your neighbour's wife, nor house, nor servant, nor any thing that is his, excepting it be by his will and consent. And if any of you shall be covenant-servants with any man, then let not crafty or malicious fellows persuade you to forsake your masters, but do them faithful service, as your duty is, and trust not such flattering or slanderous tongues as go about to entice you from your masters. For such men are the devil's messengers, who intend nothing else, but to allure you to sin, and to bring you into misery. And believe this, good children, as a most sure article of your faith, that our God is the true Lord of all things, he is the governor and master of all the world, and all is but his own household. He first made us, and from time to time daily nourishes us. He sets all things in order in his family; he it is, that

calls every man to that office, state, order, degree, and kind of living in which it pleases him to set them. He will give to every man that which he has need of, so that we with all our hearts obey him. Wherefore there is no cause why thou shouldest covet thy neighbour's goods, or by any subtle conveyance get them into thy hands. For this wants the blessing of God, yea, it deserves his curse and malediction : for scripture saith, Cursed is he that doth not abide in all things that are written in the law.

And now ye have heard, good children, a plain, brief, and true exposition of the tenth commandment, which, although it be last in number, yet I pray you let it not have the last place in your memory, but one of the first and chief seats of the same; that as soon as you be demanded this question, How understand you the tenth commandment? you may be prompt and ready to answer, We ought to fear and love our Lord God above all things, and for his sake willingly to abstain from our neighbour's wife, family, goods, and cattle, and to help him, as much as lies in us, that he may keep and possess the same.

A General Preface, to be rehearsed in the beginning of every Sermon upon the articles of our Faith, commonly called "The Creed."

The holy apostle St. Paul, good children, writes expressly, that without faith it is impossible to please God. Also Christ himself saith, He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.

Now, I trust, there is none among you but he is desirous to please God, and to enjoy everlasting life. Then, if you will attain thereto, you must chiefly and most diligently apply your minds to learn the christian faith, and the articles of the same; for you have heard, that without it there is nothing able to reconcile us to God the Father, to pacify his wrath, and to bring us to the life everlasting. For although the ten commandments are an excellent, godly, and heavenly doctrine, yet we cannot be saved or justified by them ; for we are not able, of our own strength and power, to fulfil the law and God's holy commandments ; but by them only do we learn what God requires of us, and so are brought to the knowledge of our sin. For this

is the office of the law, as St. Paul saith, to teach us our offences, and to set before our eyes the great fear of God, and the indignation which we have deserved by breaking his commandments; to the intent that we, acknowledging our own weakness, should fly to God's grace and mercy.

This fear of God is learned in the ten commandments, and it is the begininng of wisdom. But the holy christian faith is a much more high and excellent knowledge and wisdom, as St. Paul witnesses, saying, We speak wisdom among them that are perfect, such wisdom as is not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are mortal; but we teach the wisdom of God which is secret and hidden, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which wisdom none of the rulers of this world did know. These are the words of St. Paul, whereby he declares that the science of faith passes all other sciences, and he teaches heavenly and eternal wisdom, that exceeds all men's philosophy. For by faith we learn to know God, what he is, and what love he bears towards us, and how great benefits he has heaped upon us; for by faith we are made the children of God, and he gives unto us the Holy Ghost, which enlightens and kindles our hearts, that we may begin to keep his law, which else of our own strength we were not able to keep and fulfil. Wherefore, good children, it is necessary for you to learn the doctrine of faith; for without it we cannot be justified or brought again into God's favour. For no man is just or righteous before God, that hath not the Holy Ghost; and he that will receive the Holy Ghost must believe in Christ, for by faith we receive the Holy Ghost: therefore by faith we are justified. Again, if we will be saved, we must know God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written John the seventeenth. But we cannot know God, and his Son Jesus Christ, but by faith; therefore faith justifies us, and brings us life everlasting. Wherefore, good children, apply yourselves diligently to learn the christian faith, which now I will show and rehearse to you.

The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell: and the third day he rose again from death. He ascended into heaven, and

sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy catholic church: the communion of saints: the forgiveness of sins: the resurrection of the body: and life everlasting. Amen.

This is the sum of our christian faith, wherein God hath showed unto us what he is, and how great benefits he hath given, and daily doth give, unto us; to the intent that we should cast the anchor of our faith upon him, and take sure hold of his mercy and goodness, and comfort ourselves with the same, both in our lifetime, and also at our death. Wherefore, good children, be diligent not only to say by rote the words of your creed, but also to understand what is meant by the same, so that when you are asked any question thereof, you may be able to make a direct answer, and also in time to come teach the same to your children. For what can be more shame to a christian man than to profess the religion of Christ, and yet to be ignorant in the chief points of Christ's faith, and his doctrine? considering that every christian man is bound openly to declare his faith, when need shall so require, and to instruct his children in the same, that they may come to the true knowledge of Christ.

The first Sermon.—Of the Creation.

To the intent, good children, that you may the better understand the true christian faith and doctrine, you must first of all learn and know that God is a spiritual or ghostly substance, as Christ saith, John the fourth: God is not a bodily thing, which may be seen and felt. He is present in every place; he sees and beholds all things which we do, speak, or think, and yet he is not measured with any end, time, or place. And forasmuch as man's understanding could not search or find out the knowledge of this high mystery of the substance of God; Christ himself, the Son of God, did open to us that believe in him, what God is: that is to say, that there is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three persons, and yet one true and everlasting God.

And it is your bounden duty, good children, diligently to learn this lesson. And although these things pass all men's capacities, and is a doctrine hard for you to learn, yet in time to come you shall hear more of this matter.

In the mean season, bear away, I pray you, this one lesson, that there is one true and everlasting God, and yet three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And this we call the Trinity, because these three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one godly substance.

Cranmer then proceeds to show how important it is that all who profess to be christians should attain a right knowledge of God, and how tenderly he loves and favours us like a most gentle and merciful father. He says, the benefits of God toward us are infinite and innumerable, yet nevertheless as God himself is three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, so there are three special works, whereby he hath declared his singular love toward us.

The first is, that God, the Father, hath created and made us of nothing, and given to us body and soul, and all things necessary to the maintenance of our lives, and hath made us lords over all earthly creatures.

The second is, that when we were all born in sin, God the Son did redeem us from our sins and wicked life.

The third is, that the Holy Ghost doth renew our hearts, sanctify us, and make us the temples of God.

And in these three benefits, given unto us by the three persons of the most blessed Trinity, consists the matter and effect of the whole creed.

For it is the brief sum of the creed to say, I believe in God the Father, which did create and make me. I believe in God the Son, which did redeem me. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, which hath sanctified and hallowed me. For which considerations we intend to divide this our exposition, made upon the creed, into three parts; of the which the first shall be of the creation, the second of the redemption, and the third of sanctification.

Cranmer then proceeds to speak of the creation, and that we ought to put our trust in God only, stick fast to him, hang upon him, and look for all good things at his hand.

He says, this article teaches us, that God is almighty, that is to say, that he has power to work and do all things whatsoever pleases him, and no creature in heaven or earth is able to let or withstand him, and nothing is impossible unto him. And this is the foundation and beginning of christian knowledge and faith; to believe that God is

almighty.—He then speaks of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but in a manner which gave occasion to his enemies to misrepresent his views, which he therefore more clearly expressed in his Defence of the Sacrament and his answer to Gardiner. He exhorts to a proper consideration of the import of the word "almighty," as applied to the power of God, and proceeds thus:

Wherefore, good children, let us be of good cheer, and, putting our trust in God, let us reason thus.—Forasmuch as God made heaven and earth, it is evident thereby that he is Lord and Master of the same, and that all things, as well in heaven as in earth, are done according to his will.

And forasmuch as he made all things for us, it is also manifest thereby, that he willeth all creatures to do us service. Let us therefore follow the counsel of Christ, who saith, Be not careful for your life, what ye shall eat or drink; nor yet for your body, what raiment ye shall put on. Is not the life more worth than meat, and the body more of value than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, which do neither sow nor reap, nor carry into the barns, and yet your heavenly Father doth feed them. Are not you much better than they? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, they spin not. And yet I say unto you, that Solomon himself, when he was in his most gorgeous royalty and glory, was not apparelled like one of these. Now if God doth so apparel a flower, which although it flourishes to-day, yet to-morrow it withers away, and is cast into a furnace, shall he not much more do the same for you, O ye men of little faith?

These are the words of Christ, good children, by the which he exhorts us to put our trust and confidence in God, our Father, and steadfastly to believe, that he who hath given us our life, is both able and willing also to give us all things necessary to the maintenance of our life. For he is the Maker of all things, and all creatures obey his will and commandment; and if there lacked any thing that should help us, he is able every day to make all new again, as every year he makes all things to renew and spring again. Thus, by these words we learn, that God hath made heaven and earth, and all things contained therein, for us, and for our commodity; and that he both can and will give us our daily food and living. Wherefore let no man trust to his own understanding, reason, or compassing, thinking he is able to get his living or riches

by his own carefulness, or to maintain his life, but let us put our trust in God, our Father almighty; he will feed, nourish, and maintain us, as long as it shall please him. Nevertheless it is our part to labour diligently, and every man is bound to do his duty in his vocation and calling. For God willeth not that we should be idle, and lie all the day on the one side, looking that he should put meat into our mouths, as the nurse doth feed young children, but he commands us to ply our labours and occupations, and then to cast all carefulness, and put it unto him.

Thus, good children, I have expounded unto you the first article of our belief, containing the doctrine of the creation and making of the world, the which heavenly philosophy, to the intent you may the more easily bear it in your memories, I will knit it up in few words, that when you are demanded, How understand you the first article of your belief? you may thus shortly answer: I believe that God the Father hath made me and all creatures in heaven and earth; that he hath given to me, and conserveth my body and soul, reason, senses, eyes, ears, and all my other members. Also I believe that the same almighty Lord and God daily gives to me, and to us all, meat, drink, clothes, wife, children, house, land, riches, cattle, and all things necessary to the maintenance of our lives; and that he daily defends, keeps, and preserves us from all peril, and delivers us from all evil. And all this he does of his own mere mercy and goodness, without our worthiness or deservings. For the which benefits it is our duty to render to Him continual and everlasting thanks, to obey him in all things, and to take heed that we be not unkind to him that hath showed such great kindness toward us.

A general conclusion, to be rehearsed at the end of every sermon made upon the Creed.

Thus you have heard, good children, the true and plain meaning of this part of the Creed. Now it is your part deeply to print the same in your hearts, that you may put your whole trust and confidence in the true and living God, our heavenly Father.

And forasmuch as faith is the work of God, and the light of our hearts, which God putteth in us by his word and Holy Spirit, so that we cannot attain faith and the knowledge of Christ without God's word and true preachers, therefore accustom yourselves, even from your tender age, to hear the word of God, that he by his Holy Spirit may

move and stir up your hearts to true faith and knowledge of him. And beside that, you shall desire God with most hearty prayers, that as he hath given you the gift of faith, so he will continue and increase the same in you, that as you grow in age, so also you may grow in the knowledge of Christ. For he that believeth in Christ, is made thereby the Son of God, and heir of life everlasting. And then he gives us his Holy Spirit to kindle charity in our hearts, whereby we love God and keep all his commandments. All these benefits we receive by faith, in the which whosoever continues to the end of his life, shall be saved; the which God grant to us all. Amen.

The Second Sermon on the Creed.—Of our Redemption.

I declared unto you heretofore, good children, that the Creed treats chiefly of three things, that is to say, of God the Father that made the world, of God the Son that redeemed the world, and of God the Holy Ghost that sanctifies the world. And in the former sermon I taught you the high and heavenly philosophy of the creation. Wherefore now I will utter unto you the great mystery of our Redemption, which is contained in these words of the Creed:

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord; which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose from death. He ascended to heaven. He sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

In this second part of the Creed we may learn to know the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And as in the first article ye have learned what benefits we receive of God the Father, to the sustentation and maintenance of this temporal and transitory life: so in this second part we shall learn to know how great treasures and rich gifts we have received by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the attaining of the perfect and everlasting life. And here you may consider, good children, how great was the misery, and how horrible was the indignation of God, which we were brought unto by Adam. So great it was, that neither gold nor silver, nor any other thing, was able to buy us out of the same, but only Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and that by his

death and effusion of his most precious blood. And of this great misery and indignation of God toward us this was the cause.

At what time God had made Adam and Eve, and set them in paradise, he treated them like a most loving and gentle Father: for he made them lords over all living creatures, beasts and fowl, and did give unto them all trees that bare fruit, that they might feed thereon; only he forbad them, that they should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And yet he gave them warning of the great loss and damage that they should suffer, if they ate of that tree, saying, Whensoever you shall taste of the fruit of that tree, you shall be made mortal, and shall die. Their duty unto so gentle a God and so merciful a Father, had been, in their hearts to have believed him, trusted him, and loved him; to have obeyed him, and to keep all his commandments gladly. But our most crafty enemy, Satan, envying man's felicity, spake to Eve by the serpent, and said. "No, you shall not die, but you shall be like gods, knowing both good and evil." And with these most poisoned words he persuaded Eve to eat of the fruit which was forbidden. And Eve gave of the same to Adam, who also did eat thereof; and so did break God's commandment.

Now I pray you mark, good children, what they lost by this their disobedience. First, when Adam and Eve were thus deceived by the serpent, and persuaded that God did not favour them, but had envy at them, that they should have knowledge of good and evil, and that for envy he forbad them to eat of that fruit that should give them such great knowledge, they did no more trust God, but began to trust themselves, and studied to care and provide for themselves. Secondly, when they no more trusted God, they could no more find in their hearts to love him, but began to dote upon themselves, and to think that they had no better friend, either in heaven or earth, than their own selves. And after that they had thus put their trust and confidence in themselves, and dotingly loved all that was their own, by-and-bye followed fear and concupiscence; for by-and-bye they began to hate and avoid all things that were painful or unpleasant to the flesh, and dotingly to lust and long for such things as were delectable and pleasant to the flesh.

Hereby you perceive, good children, how our first parents, Adam and Eve, being poisoned with the venom of

the serpent, were cast into four horrible vices or diseases. The first is, that they did not trust in God. The second, that they did not love God. The third, that they did not fear him, but as a cruel tyrant. The fourth, that they were replenished with concupiscence, and evil desires, lusts, and appetites. And these are the roots of original sin, out of which all other sins do spring and grow. So Adam and Eve had a very great fall, they fell from God's benediction, favour, and love, into God's curse, anger, and displeasure; they fell from original justice* into original sin, by the which fall all the strength and powers, both of their bodies and souls, were sorely decayed and corrupted. And as our first parents, Adam and Eve, were infected and corrupted, even so are we that are their children. For as we see, by daily experience, that commonly gouty parents have gouty children; and if the father and mother are infected with leprosy, we see commonly that the children have the same disease; so likewise, as our first parents, Adam and Eve, did not put their trust in God, no more do they that are born of them. And as they loved not God, so their children love him not: and as they followed their own concupiscence, lusts, and appetites, and not the will of God, even so do all their issue. So that all their posterity upon earth are sinners, even in their birth: for they have not their trust in God, they love not God, they have not a fatherly fear unto him, they are full of evil lusts, and appetites, and desires, as you have heard, good children, in the tenth commandment. And for this cause the scripture doth say, that all we are conceived and born in sin: and St. Paul saith, that by nature we are the children of God's wrath. So that we all should everlastingly be damned, if Christ by his death had not redeemed us.

Wherefore, good children, mark well this part of your creed, that teaches you both to know Christ, and by what means he did redeem you. For, first, in the creed, he is called the only Son, or only begotten Son of God. Whereof it must needs follow, that he is very God by nature, begotten of God the Father, before the foundation of the world was laid. He is the everlasting Wisdom and Word of God, by the which, God the Father made all things. That he is also very man, is evidently expressed in these words: I believe in Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under

* Righteousness.

Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. And these two things I cannot comprehend more shortly nor aptly than by these words; "Christ our Lord is very God and very man."

Secondly, Learn this also—by what means Christ redeemed us: for whatsoever God hath commanded in the ten commandments, which we have not fulfilled, because we all are sinners, that Christ himself hath fulfilled for us; and whatsoever punishment we have deserved to suffer of God for our sins and offences, that Christ hath taken upon himself and suffered for us. By this you may perceive how requisite it was, that Christ, God and man, should be conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure virgin. For, if Christ should redeem us, and satisfy for our sins, then must he needs be holy and without sin; for if he had been guilty and a sinner, then could not he have holpen his ownself, but he must needs have had another Saviour and Redeemer for himself, as well as we have for us; for whatsoever he had done or suffered should have been worthily for his own offences, and yet could he not have satisfied for himself, much less then could he have satisfied for others. Wherefore, it was necessary, if he should satisfy for us, that he should be conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin, that his nativity might be pure, without sin, and not corrupt, as ours is; that our corrupt and damnable nativity might be purified and made holy by the holy and pure nativity of Christ. Therefore, we say in the creed, He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary; that Christ, being pure and clean from all sin, might redeem sinners, and satisfy for them. Now, forasmuch as the justice of God requires that Christ should suffer and make satisfaction for us, and do all things that we were bound to do, it was necessary that he should be made man: for if he had not been a very* man, he could not have done for us all those things which we were bound to do.

And again, if he had not been very God, he could not have been pure and clean from all sin, and so have made a true and perfect satisfaction for our sins: for no man can perfectly fulfil the will of God, but God himself alone. Wherefore in that he suffered for our sins, thereby he declared that he was a very, pure, and natural man. Again, he gave most certain and evident tokens of his Godhead, in that he overcame and vanquished the devil, sin, and death;

* Real.

for if he had not been very God, he could not have loosed the bands of death, neither have raised himself from death to life. So you hear, good children, that our Lord Jesus Christ was very God and very man, not conceived in sin, as we are, but conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the most pure virgin Mary. And as man, he suffered death for us, and descended into hell. But as naturally God, he loosed the bands and pains of hell, he destroyed the kingdom of death, he rose from death to life, and so paid the ransom for our sins, and took away all the guiltiness of the same. Therefore, when we believe in Christ, and, stedfastly cleaving to the word of God, surely persuade ourselves in our hearts that we are thus redeemed by Christ, then God is no more angry or displeased with us for our sins, but freely and mercifully he forgives us all our offences for the death and passion of his Son Jesus Christ; and he gives us also the Holy Ghost, by whose help we may withstand sin, and be delivered from the same. The which matters St. Paul knits up in one brief sentence, not so short as notable and weighty; saying, "Christ was delivered to death for our sins, and did rise again for our justification." In which sentence St. Paul not only declares what Christ did, but also for what end, and for whom, he suffered death and rose again.

For, seeing that Christ was that most innocent Lamb that never was blotted with any spot of sin, and yet he suffered for us as a sinner, it is evident hereby that he died not for himself, but took upon him our sins, and bore for us the burden which we should have borne. Moreover, seeing that Christ was not overcome by death, but by his mighty power he vanquished death, and rose from death to life, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, hereby we may evidently perceive that the great wrath and indignation of God to us hath an end, and that by our lively faith in him, our sins are forgiven us, and that we are reconciled into the favour of God, made holy and righteous. For then God no more imputes unto us our former sins; but he imputes and gives unto us the justice and righteousness of his Son Jesus Christ, who suffered for us.

These are but few words, but surely they are of great importance! For in this sentence St. Paul includes the sum and effect of the holy gospel, when he saith, Christ was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our righteousness. For likewise, as when another man doth

pay my ransom, and satisfy or suffer for me, I myself am judged to pay the same, and no man afterwards can accuse me thereof; and when another is bound for me, if he be by any lawful means discharged, I myself am counted to be discharged also: even so, forasmuch as Christ himself took upon him the band of death for us, and to satisfy for us, and so did indeed by his death; we ourselves, for whom he was thus bound, justly are delivered and discharged from death and damnation. And so we are counted righteous, forasmuch as no man dare accuse us for that sin, for which satisfaction is made by our Saviour Christ. And when our Saviour, Jesus Christ, had thus satisfied for our sin, and so overcame death and hell, then, like a most valiant conqueror, he ascended into heaven, where God his Father received him with a most glorious triumph, and placed him on his right hand, and made him Lord over all creatures, and therefore he is called in the creed also, "our Lord." For if he had not ransomed and redeemed us, we had been cast down to hell for ever. But seeing that he redeemed and bought us, therefore we are his, and he is our Lord and Master, and him we must love, obey, and serve.

And this is our most high and everlasting comfort, that Jesus Christ is our Lord, and we his servants: for because he is our Lord, therefore he will defend us, and deliver us from all dangers. And although we are sinners, yet he will forgive us our sins, because he hath paid the ransom and debt due for the same. And although we die, yet he will raise us up again, because he hath overcome and conquered death. And although we are ever so much afraid of the sorrows and pains of hell, yet they shall not be able to hold us, because that to them, who are his servants, he hath broken hell, and set open the gates thereof.

Wherefore, seeing that we have so mighty a Lord and Master, we are out of all peril and danger. But we again, above all things, must study to obey our Lord and Master, and do those things which he commandeth. For he hath redeemed and bought us for this intent and purpose, that we should be just and holy, as he himself is holy. And he that is not obedient unto Christ's commandments, shall be sorely punished. For our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead.

Wherefore, good children, labour with all diligence and study, that when Christ shall come again to judge the

world, he may find you holy and obedient; for then he will reward you with everlasting life. After this manner, Christ redeemed us from sin, and from the horrible offence of Adam, by whom we were all condemned; for by Christ's passion and death, and by his gospel, we have obtained thus much, that we may believe and trust in God, and trusting in God, we have his Holy Spirit, whereby we may also love God. And this Holy Ghost renews us, and cleanses us from all evil lusts and desires, that we being thus made holy and righteous, may keep God's commandments, and serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore, good children, believe with all your heart in this Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord; and doubt not but that he hath suffered for our sins, and contented the justice of his Father for the same, and hath brought us again into his favour, and made us his well-beloved children, and heirs of his kingdom. And when you are asked, How understand you the second part of the creed? you shall answer, I believe that Jesus Christ, very God, begotten of God the Father, and very man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who, by his precious blood and holy passion hath redeemed me, a miserable and condemned wretch, from all my sins, from death eternal, and from the tyranny of the devil, that I should be his own true subject, and live within his kingdom, and serve him in a new and everlasting life and justice, even as our Lord Christ, after he rose from death to life, liveth and reigneth everlastingly. Or else, if you will answer more shortly, you may say thus; I believe that Christ was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

The Third Sermon.—Of our Sanctification.

Now remains the third part of the creed to be declared, which treats of our sanctification—how we are made holy. And it is spoken in these words:

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the rising again of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

In the second part of the creed, which treats of our redemption and the price given for us, you have been taught, good children, to know the second person in the Trinity, Jesus Christ, what he is, and what he hath done for us; that he was made man for our sakes, that he took upon him our sins, and suffered for us the fear and pangs of

death and hell, and had victory over them by his passion and death. And after, by his godly and victorious power, he rose again from death to life. And after this most glorious conquest, he ascended into heaven, where he sitteth at the right hand of his Father, and is our Lord, and we his servants, dearly bought.

All this you have learned in the last sermon ; but now, good children, in this third part of the creed you shall learn to know the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, and also his benefits and gifts, that we may know what we have received of God after our redemption, whereby we may be made meet to come to everlasting life through the merits of Christ. For although our Lord Jesus Christ hath redeemed us from the captivity of sin, death, and hell, and hath set us again in the favour of God, yet we should have no knowledge of these great benefits, we should feel in our consciences no comfort, joy, or peace by the same, if they were not declared unto us by the preaching of God's most holy word. And our consciences should still remain troubled, and the fear of eternal death, and all naughty desires and concupiscences of the frail flesh should ever remain in us, even as from Adam's time they are in us as soon as we be born, and so we should be utterly unapt to the kingdom of God and life everlasting, if we should still remain as we are born.

For if we will be the heirs of God and everlasting life, we must be born again, and sanctified or made holy, as appertains to the children of the most holy God. Now this new birth, or sanctification, the Holy Ghost works in us; and therefore he is called the Holy Ghost, because every thing that is sanctified or hallowed, is sanctified or made holy by him. Wherefore, when the Holy Ghost is not in man, then it is not possible that he should be holy, although he did all the good works under the sun. And for this cause St. Paul writing to the Romans, calls the Holy Ghost the Spirit of sanctification, that is to say, the Spirit that maketh holiness. Learn, therefore, good children, that all we must be made holy and new men by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, and that we cannot attain this holiness by our own strength or works, and therefore we must believe in the Holy Ghost that he will sanctify us at such time or place, and after that sort and manner, as it shall please him. And it is our part to give place to his working, and not to withstand the same. And therefore we say in this creed, " I

believe in the Holy Ghost." But it is necessary to speak some things here of the manner of sanctification,—how and after what manner the Holy Ghost doth hallow us, that we may so prepare ourselves, or rather give place to the Holy Ghost who prevents us,* that he with his light, and almighty strength and power, may work his will in us.

Now I desire you to mark diligently by what means and fashion the Holy Ghost doth work this sanctification or hallowing in us. After that our Lord Jesus Christ by his death, passion, and resurrection had redeemed us, and obtained for us that our sins should be forgiven, and we be made the children of God, shortly after in the feast of Pentecost, he sent down upon his apostles the Holy Ghost, in the likeness of fiery tongues.

The which Holy Ghost gave them wisdom, skill, courage, and constancy, to teach boldly this holy gospel of Christ, that is to say, this christian faith, whereof we do speak. And where they could not be present themselves, or long abide and continue in their own persons, thither they sent their disciples and other godly and learned men, and to them they gave the Holy Ghost, by laying their hands upon their heads. And this rite or ceremony, to ordain preachers and ministers of God's word, hath continued in the church, even from the apostles' time, unto this day, and shall endure unto the world's end. For St. Paul saith, "How shall men believe without a preacher?" And how shall men preach except they be sent? And here you may learn that this holy gospel which we preach, and the doctrine of the grace of Christ taught in the whole church, comes not of the will of man, but by the commandment of God, and by the motion of the Holy Ghost, who stirs up men's minds to publish God's most holy word, and works by his secret inspiration, in the preachers and ministers of the same. For they were not able so much as to open their mouths to teach so high mysteries and heavenly wisdom, if the Holy Ghost did not move them thereto, and work in them. Neither would the hearers so greatly esteem the preacher's word, and give so good ear unto it, except the Holy Ghost persuaded them that the doctrine of the gospel were of God, and came from heaven. Now the Holy Ghost works by this word on this manner. First, he that believes the gospel, and receives the doctrine of Christ, is made the son of God, as St. John witnesses

* Comes before us.]

in his gospel, saying, As many as receive him, he hath given them power to be made the children of God. For when we believe in Christ, and are baptized, then we are born again, and are made the children of God. And when we are his children, then he gives the Holy Ghost into our hearts, as St. Paul testifies, writing thus: Forasmuch as you are now the children of God, therefore God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, which crieth, Abba, Father. And when we have received the Holy Ghost, he kindles in our hearts true love towards God, as St. Paul writes in the epistle to the Romans, in the fifth chapter. The love of God, saith he, is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. And where the true love of God reigneth, there are God's commandments kept, and there beginneth a certain obedience to his will and pleasure.

Furthermore, the Holy Ghost doth stay the flesh and the lusts of the same, and helps us to overcome them, that we be not carried away by them, but may continue in cleanness and holiness of life. These are the benefits and works of the Holy Ghost in us. And to the intent you may the more easily bear them away, I will as briefly as I can, repeat them again unto you.

First of all, the Holy Ghost provokes and stirs up men to preach God's word. Then he moves men's hearts to faith, and calls them to baptism, and then by faith and baptism he works so, that he makes us new men again. And when we are thus newly born and made again, and are become the children of God, then the Holy Ghost dwells in us, and makes us holy and godly, that we may be the temples of God, in whom God may dwell and inhabit. Also this Holy Ghost daily more and more increases and establishes our faith, that we, like most loving children, may call and embrace our heavenly Father, and hang fast about his neck. The same Holy Ghost also assures and warrants us that our sins are forgiven, and that our pardon is signed with God's seal. He also kindles in us a fervent love towards God, and makes us willing to keep God's law and commandments, and helps us also to fight against sin, and to withstand our evil appetites and desires. Furthermore, with the cross of sickness and divers other kinds of afflictions and adversities, the Holy Ghost doth, as it were, crucify and mortify us to the world, that we may live to Christ. And this

work he works continually in us, and ceases not till he has wrought in our hearts a perfect faith and a perfect charity, and until sin and all evil desires are at length wholly purged out of us by the death of our bodies. And then we shall be perfect in all holiness, and delivered from all sin and adversity, and be heirs of our Father's kingdom, and his true and most dearly beloved children.

Wherefore, good children, as heretofore you have been taught, that we ought to believe in God the Father that made us, and in God the Son that redeemed or bought us, so you must now learn to believe in the Holy Ghost that hath hallowed us, and doth continually more and more renew and make holy, all those that believe the gospel. For he that believes in Jesus Christ, that he is our Lord and our Redeemer, to him God gives the Holy Ghost to make him holy and righteous. As St. Paul witnesses, saying, No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. And forasmuch as now it has been plainly declared unto you, after what sort and manner the Holy Ghost doth sanctify us, it is your part not only to imprint this lesson diligently in your minds, but also to desire God, with continual and earnest prayers, that he will vouchsafe more and more to sanctify you.

And as much as lieth in you, apply yourselves to hear godly sermons, and give your hearts to God, like wax, apt and meet to receive what thing soever it shall please him to print in you.

For he that is willing and glad to listen to godly sermons, he that is studious to learn the word of God, wherein Christ is preached, and with a steadfast faith cleaves to the promise of the gospel, he is made partaker of this sanctification and holiness, and of this so great comfort and everlasting salvation. For God saith by his prophet Isaiah, My word shall not return to me in vain. And St. Paul saith, that the gospel is the power of God, wherewith he worketh the salvation of all them that believe.

Now the rest that follows in the creed is a short declaration of these things before rehearsed. For it follows in the creed—I believe the holy catholic church; that is to say, all godly and christian men must believe that the gospel or doctrine of God's grace through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, is never published in vain in the world, or sowed abroad without fruit; but ever there is found some company of men, or some congregation of

good people, who believe the gospel and be saved. And this company of men who believe the gospel, although here upon earth they are severed in sundry places, yet are they called one holy catholic or universal church of Christ, that is to say, a multitude, congregation, or company of christian people. For this word, "Church," does not here betoken a temple or church builded of timber and stone, but it signifies a company of men lightened with the Spirit of Christ, which do receive the gospel and come together to hear God's word, and to pray. And this christian church is a communion of saints, that is to say, all that are of this communion or company are holy, and one holy body under Christ their Head: they are one holy congregation or assembly. And this congregation receives of their Head and Lord, Jesus Christ, all spiritual riches and gifts that pertain to the sanctification and making holy of the same body. And these ghostly treasures are common to the whole body, and to every member of the same. For he, that is unfeignedly a faithful and godly man, is made partaker of these benefits; and these are the said gifts which are common to the whole church of Christ, and to every member of the same.

The first is, that God the Father, that everlasting and endless majesty, is our most gentle and merciful Father. That God the Son is our Redeemer and Mediator between the Father and us. And that God the Holy Ghost, is the common sanctifier or hallower of all them that have a true faith in God. The second is the preaching of the gospel, the administration of baptism, and the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which we are made partakers of all the inheritance of heaven, and of all the benefits of Christ. The third is prayer. The fourth is the cross of affliction and adversity, which God sends to all godly men, to make them to know him, to prove thereby and try their faith, to mortify their flesh, and to make clean the corruption of the same.

And here I speak only of the cross which good men suffer. For the afflictions of the unfaithful and ungodly, do rather hurt them, than make them holy. For, inasmuch as their unpatientness is increased by such adversity, they are brought to more desperation and damnation.

Now, it is very good for you to know these things, that you may also know that there is nothing in heaven or earth better for us than is the true knowledge of God; and

that these excellent gifts and benefits cannot be had, but only in the aforesaid church or congregation, and no where else. But when the true church, which is ruled by the Holy Ghost and the word of God, promises us these so great riches and benefits, we ought not to doubt but that we have already received them. And when the church appoints and ordains us to be preachers and ministers of these most precious treasures, we must steadfastly believe that God effectually worketh with us, that he is present with us, and that he at all times strengthens us against the world and the devil, and that he helps us to do all things according to our calling, prosperously and with good success.

Secondly, We must believe the remission of sins. Therefore next unto this article, I believe the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, is added, The forgiveness of sins. For wheresoever the church of Christ is, there is freely offered that eternal comfort above all measure, that is to say, the favour of God and remission of sins. And without that church is no remission of sin. Wherefore we must seek remission of sins in the church of Christ, and desire absolution; that when the true church by its ministers promises us remission of our sins, and here in earth absolves us, we may surely trust that in heaven also, before God, we are absolved and pardoned.

Thirdly, We must believe the resurrection of the flesh; wherefore after the article of the remission of sin follows next this article: I believe the rising again of the flesh. For among other punishments for original sin, laid upon Adam and his posterity, we daily see this horrible pain, that the goodly beautiful body of man, created to immortality, must needs once be dissolved by death and brought to a filthy and corrupted corpse and grave, that the tyranny of sin, which so long as we live rages in our flesh, by our death may cease and have an end, as St Paul saith unto the Romans: for by death of the body, cease all the desires, concupiscences, and rages of the mind, which are against the will and commandments of God. There cease also all sins against our neighbour, as anger, envy, lechery, covetousness, pride, and all ill affections; and at the last day God shall raise us again from death, so that such infirmities and sins shall no more be found in us, but we shall be pure, spiritual, and immortal, and like to the bright and clear body of Christ. And that we may the more assuredly believe this, both Christ himself rose from death, and many saints also with him.

Fourthly, We must believe everlasting life. Wherefore it followeth in the creed, I believe everlasting life; that is to say, I believe that when we shall rise from death, then we shall live ever with Christ in perfect holiness and justice, and in such glorious joy, as no tongue can tell, nor heart think. And the creed we end with Amen; which is as much as to say—I believe that all these articles of our belief, are very true, and there I have a sure faith, trust, and confidence. Therefore, good children, from the bottom of your hearts, you must believe in the Holy Ghost, who promises unto us remission of our sins, by all the true preachers and ministers of God's word. And he also gives light to our hearts and minds, and moves us to believe God's word, and to put our faith and trust in him. And the same Holy Ghost daily purifies and sanctifies us, purges and cleanses us from sin, and after this bodily death, shall raise us again to everlasting life. And take this for a sure conclusion, and doubt not, that the Holy Ghost, as he hath begun these things in us, so he will finish the same, if we obey him, and continue in faith unto the end of our lives: for he that continueth unto the end shall be saved.

And this is the sum of this third part of the creed, treating of our sanctification or hallowing. Good children, mark well this lesson, that when you are demanded, How understand you the third part of the creed? ye may answer thus: I believe that neither by man's strength, power, nor wisdom, neither by mine own endeavour, nor compass of mine own reason, I am able to believe in Jesus Christ, or to come unto him. But the Holy Ghost called me by the word of the gospel; and with the gifts of his grace he has hitherto endowed me and hallowed me, and in the true faith he has hitherto preserved and confirmed me; and this he has done not only to me, but also he calls and gathers together, in the unity of one faith and one baptism, all the universal church that is here in earth, and he hallows, keeps, and preserves the same in the true knowledge of Christ, and faith in his promises. And in this church he gives free and general pardon to me, and to all that believe in him, of all our sins, offences, and trespasses; and at the last day he shall raise me and all others that are dead; and all that died in the true faith of Jesus Christ he shall glorify in the life everlasting. Therefore, to the said Holy Ghost that sanctifies us, with the Father that made and created us, and the Son that redeemed us, be given all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

A GENERAL PREFACE

TO BE REHEARSED IN THE BEGINNING OF EVERY SERMON MADE ON

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Ye have learned heretofore, good children, in the Creed, what we ought to believe, and in the Ten Commandments what we ought to do; but we can neither believe nor do as we ought to do, except the Holy Ghost work within us both a true faith, and also a due obedience towards God and his law. For faith is the gift of God, and all good things come from the Father of lights. Therefore we must needs ask and crave these benefits at His hand, who only is the Giver of them; for so Christ saith, that God, the Father, will give to us his children all things, so that we sue to him for them; and the prophet David saith, Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and I shall deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Also our Saviour Christ commands us to do the same, saying, Ask, and you shall have; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.

Now therefore, seeing that we have learned what we should believe and do, it is most necessary for us to call for God's grace, with most earnest and fervent prayers, that we may be able to perform the things which we are bound to do: for our Saviour Christ hath promised us, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, he will give it us. Also he saith, that whatsoever we ask, if we believe, we shall receive the same. Where is to be noted, that if we will obtain our requests, we must ask in the name of Christ; and also trust assuredly, that for Christ's sake our prayers shall be heard. To ask in Christ's name is to ask according to his will, that is to say, to ask that which he hath commanded.

Therefore when we pray we may say thus: O God, our Father, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which art in heaven, I durst not of mine own head be so bold to come unto thy most high and excellent Majesty, to desire any thing of thee; but thy well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, hath commanded me so to do; and only in his name, and at his commandment, I am so bold. Therefore if thou hear me, thou hearest thy dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; and if thou hear me not, then thou hearest not Jesus Christ himself, who hath sent me

to thee, and hath commanded me to ask in his name. Of this prayer, made in faith, speaks St. John in his epistle, saying, "This trust we have in God, that when we ask any thing according to his will, he doth hear us."

Therefore, we should steadfastly believe that God doth hear our prayer; for he that believeth not, he shall obtain nothing. And therefore Christ saith, If you believe, you shall obtain. And to the intent that we should believe and surely think that we be heard, he hath promised to grant whatsoever we ask in his name. And again, to the intent that we should know and be sure that we pray according to his will, he himself hath taught us how and what we should pray and ask. Therefore it is not in our liberty whether we will pray or not, but by God's commandment we are bound to pray, as you have heard in the second commandment. Now, therefore, with all diligence learn, good children, the holy prayer of the Lord, which the great Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, taught us himself, saying to his disciples, Ye shall pray after this manner:

Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and suffer us not to be led into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

This, good children, is the prayer of the Lord; which although it be short, yet it contains most great and weighty matters, such as neither angel nor man, nor other creature, was able so pithily to comprise in so few words; for in this prayer, Christ our Lord teaches us to ask all things that either are commanded us in the Ten Commandments, or promised us in the articles of our Creed. Wherefore, good children, you ought to endeavour, not only to learn without the book this most holy prayer, taught us by Christ's own mouth, our great Master and Teacher, but also you ought to give diligence to understand and justly to weigh every word of so great a Master; that when you are apposed* herein, you may be able to make a direct answer, and also in time to come to teach your children the true understanding of this prayer, as you yourselves now are instructed. For what greater shame can there be before God and man, than when in our mouths we profess ourselves to be christian men, and to know what we ought to believe, and how to live, and yet to be ignorant what

* Examined.

thing we ought to ask of God, and after what manner we ought to ask those things, which he of his goodness hath promised most largely to give us? Or than, if we know how and what to ask, yet of negligence, sloth, or contempt of God, not to ask the same indeed in such wise as we ought to do? Specially seeing that the proper office of a christian man is to call upon God in all his business and necessities, to give thanks, and evermore to honour his most blessed name with most high lauds and praises. Wherefore, good children, forasmuch as God hath commanded us to resort to him boldly, and to bemoan ourselves to him in all our troubles and adversities, and hath promised that he will hear our prayers, deliver us, and grant us all things necessary for our salvation, let us not refuse this honour that we are called unto, let us not refuse this remedy, help, aid, and succour, that is freely offered of our most merciful Father, to all his children that will call upon his name; for this is a sacrifice most acceptable to God, wherewith he is most highly honoured and pleased.

Wherefore, good children, both daily and hourly accustom yourselves, even from your tender age, to pray to your heavenly Father for all things necessary. Offer up unto him at your uprising and downlying, before your meals and after your meat, this sacrifice of your lips, the oblation of praise and thanksgiving; worship him at all times with the frankincense of this prayer, taught unto you by your Saviour Christ; the perfume whereof, if it be cast into the burning coals of faith and charity, pierces the clouds, and is so sweet and pleasant unto God, that it vanishes not away until it have obtained that which it was sent for. For it is written, that the prayer of a just man can do much with God; and the eyes of the Lord do look upon the righteous, and his ears be opened to hear their prayers.

Wherefore study to be the children of God, and there is no doubt but your heavenly Father will give all good things, which you shall desire of him, in the name of his Son, and your brother, Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory now and ever. Amen.

Rehearse this before every sermon of the Lord's Prayer.

The First Sermon.

Now, good children, to the intent you may the better understand this prayer, you shall first learn this lesson,

that we, wretched sinners, do not first prevent* God, and go before him in the work of our justification, but it is God that layeth the first foundation of our salvation. He begins with us, and first calls us by the gospel. First, he sends unto us godly and faithful ministers, by whom we are baptized, and before we do any good work he offers unto us his grace; he sends unto us preachers and messengers of peace, who declare unto us the glad tidings of the gospel, and the promises of the favour of God towards all them that truly repent them of their evil living, and do move them to put their trust in God's mercy for pardon of the same.

God also opens our hearts, that we may listen and give credit to his holy preachers, as Christ himself saith, Ye have not first chosen me, but I have chosen you.

Now, forasmuch as God hath thus called us to the faith, and by faith hath given us light in our hearts, that we may forsake all strange gods, and believe only in him, it is our part to lead our life in godliness, to desire God, with hearty and fervent prayers, that it may please him to make perfect that which he hath begun in us, to help and strengthen us, that by his grace we may be able to do those things which he hath commanded us, and that he will augment and increase our faith in us; for the prayer of the unfaithful is nothing worth before God, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Therefore, God must begin and call us by his word, and put faith in our hearts, or else we should never ask any thing of him. And for this cause we are not taught in the Lord's Prayer to say to God, Father, grant me to believe that thou art my father; but we are taught to say thus; OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME. That is to say, O Lord God, our heavenly Father, before I began to pray, and before I knew thy name, thou, through thine exceeding great mercy, didst send unto me thy preachers, by whom thou didst declare unto me, that thou art my Father for Jesus Christ's sake, and thou didst open my heart that I might believe that thou art my Father. Therefore grant, I beseech thee, my heavenly Father, that thy name may be hallowed. And he that taketh not God to be his Father, yet he may learn that it is so by this prayer. For Christ our Lord knew most certainly the will of his heavenly Father, that is to say, that he would be our most sweet and loving Father, or else he would not

* Come before.

have taught us this title, "Our Father," and therefore must we again, upon our parts, have such a love and obedience to him, as becomes the children unto their father, and conceive a most assured trust in God, who is all our Father, that we shall lack nothing necessary for us, and that nothing shall be able to hurt us, as long as we have so mighty and so loving a Father.

We see, by daily experience, how entirely the fathers love their children, what care they take to bring them up in virtue and learning, and to get them good masters and governors; how they labour to provide for their living, and all things necessary for them. And if, perchance, their children commit any fault, for which they deserve correction, yet we see how the father's love remains, what pity and compassion he has for them, how loth he is to beat them, and would rather forgive them, if it were not for their benefit and amendment. And when the child falls on his knees, and asks forgiveness, promising amendment, we see how ready and willing the father is to forgive. Now, seeing our earthly fathers are so loving to their children, much more God, our heavenly Father, will be our most kind and loving Father, will nourish, keep, and defend us, teach and instruct us the way to everlasting salvation. And if we fall into any error or sin, yet, for Christ's sake, he is willing to forgive us; and although he punishes us here for a time, yet he doth it of the fatherly love that he bears towards us, not to punish us for ever, but to amend us, and to make us to know our faults, and to bring us again into the right way. And like a most loving Father, he corrects us for a small time in this world, lest he should punish us for ever in the world to come. Of this, therefore, so loving and so mighty a Father, we may well rejoice, and have an exceeding great comfort, far passing any heart to think, or tongue to tell. And him, again, we ought most entirely to love and obey, seeing that he is our Father, and hath laden us with so many gifts and benefits. With glad hearts, therefore, you ought to say this prayer, which when you say, you speak with God, the Father in heaven, and he hears you, and, like a most kind Father, grants all that you ask.

Oftentimes also and earnestly you must pray;—when you rise in the morning, when you go to the church, when you eat and drink, when you go to bed, when you awake out of your sleep; that from your youth you may accustom

yourselves both gladly and often to pray. For by prayer we shall obtain all things that either Christ hath purchased for us, or our heavenly Father hath promised to us.

Now this also you must diligently consider, that we say, Father which art in heaven, to discern him from our fathers which are here upon earth; for we have fathers here in earth, which are but men, and not able to save us. But in heaven we have another manner of Father, of far more might, a spiritual and an everlasting Father, who in all our needs is able to help us, and finally to give us health and life everlasting. And as children take of their carnal fathers flesh and blood, and many times are very like them in their face and countenance, so take we of our heavenly Father our soul and spirit, and therein we ought to resemble our heavenly Father; that is to say, we ought to believe his word, obey his commandments, forbear those things that he forbade, and in all things be conformable to his holy will and word. And then is he assuredly our gentle Father, and we his dear children. And then, as he dwelleth in heaven, in a light passing all measure, even so shall we dwell with him in heaven for ever. These great things, which far exceed the capacity of man's understanding, our Saviour Christ teaches us in these few words, "Our Father which art in heaven."

Now follow in this holy prayer certain petitions, wherein are comprehended all things that are either contained in the ten commandments, or else promised in the creed. These petitions, good children, you shall learn with all diligence, that you may know what you should ask. The three first petitions treat of the matters pertaining to the first table; the other four speak of things promised in the creed, and belonging to the second table, as hereafter you shall hear.

The first petition contains matters of the first and second commandment; I am thy God. Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in vain. And these are the words of that petition, THY NAME BE HALLOWED.

Before, I told you, good children, that we go not before God; we pray not first, that God will be our God and our Father; but God of his inestimable mercy prevents us, calls us by his word, calls us unto faith, gives us his Spirit, to know him for our Father and Lord, before we could think thereof and seek for God. But now, seeing that by his word and faith he hath called us, and by

baptism hath grafted us in Christ, and made us members of his church, we ought not to be slothful nor idle, but study to go forward and increase in godliness, and to pray thus, "Our Father which art in heaven;" forasmuch as thou hast given unto us, being unworthy, thy holy gospel, and hast chosen us, and not we thee; and seeing that thou hast sent unto us preachers, who teach unto us thy word, whereby we are sanctified and instructed in the faith, so that now we may know thee for God, and partly fulfil the first commandment; now fulfil, O Father, what thou hast begun, proceed to help us, that we may fulfil the second commandment; that is, that thy name may be hallowed, that is to say, may be honoured, as holy. This prayer pleases God, and he hears it, and God gives us grace and strength that we may hallow his name.

To hallow the name of God, is not to make it holy, which in itself is ever most holy; but to hallow his name, is to take it for holy, and reverently to use it, as a most holy thing; of great fear and love to God, to beware that we speak not of his name vainly, nor without great reverence; to confess his name, to laud him, extol him, and in all necessities to call upon him.

And on the other side we violate the holy name of God, when we abuse the same to evil and naughty things, when we speak evil of God or godly things, when we teach any false doctrine of God and his religion, or abuse the name of God to idolatry and errors, or when by the name of God we are forsworn.

Also, when by the name of God we curse men or other creatures, or when we speak of God and godly things and make thereof but scoffing and jesting. And when we live not according to the word of God, and regard not God, but give evil example to others, both to think and speak of God and godly things lightly and contemptuously, as if they cared not for them.

But now it is a horrible hearing, good children, that we are called the church of Christ and christian men, we are taught that God is our Lord and Father, and yet we are such faint, evil, naughty, and unkind people, that we do not hallow or reverently use his name. Therefore it is more than need to pray, and instantly to pray for God's help, that we misuse not his name unreverently, but that we may hallow it, and most highly honour it ourselves, and provoke others to do the like; which we shall do, if we

preach and teach the word of God purely, and agree unto the same in pure, innocent living, so that no man can reprehend us, if we believe God's word and profess the same; in all necessities call upon his name, and give him thanks for all his benefits.

But when false doctrine is taught, then the name of God is defiled, and false doctrine is honoured, and taken for the holy word of God, which indeed is not holy, but wicked, and the false invention of the devil, the inventor of all lies and falsehood. And how can the holy name of God be more horribly abused, than when the devil's lies and false inventions are set out and honoured under the pretence and colour of God's holy name, that thereby the people may the sooner be deceived?

Moreover, the name of God is not hallowed, but blasphemed and despised, when the true word of God is cruelly persecuted, as Cain persecuted his brother Abel. For when the ungodly hypocrites do call the gospel and true doctrine of Christ heresy and error; then is God, as it were, accused of heresy, who gave the said doctrine, which is a horrible blasphemy of God's name.

Also, when we believe not the word of God, then we violate and do injury to the name of God, not taking him to be true.

The name of God is not hallowed also, but little regarded, and contemned, when the gospel and word of God is not boldly professed before the world; for he that denies the gospel, and doth not constantly stand unto it, but for fear of men shrinks from it, and revokes those things which before he has truly and godly taught, he counts not Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, nor his holy word and gospel to be of that value and estimation, that he will for their sakes speak boldly, or suffer any thing, before the kings and powers of the world.

Also, we do not hallow the name of God, when we call God our Father, and boast ourselves to be his children, and yet that which we profess, we do not perform by holy and godly living; for an unthrifty and wicked child is a dishonour to his father. Hereof God complains by the prophet Ezekiel, the 36th chapter, saying, By you my name is blasphemed among people and nations.

And he also regards not the holy name of God, who does not call upon God and give thanks to God, as though he were not the very true God, who hath holpen him, and

both can and will help him in all his needs. For he that acknowledges himself, that he is holpen of God, he of duty must needs give him thanks therefore, and he that trusts to be holpen, must likewise call upon him for the same.

Therefore, briefly to conclude, he that teaches any other than God's true doctrine, that believes not in the name of Christ, that does not boldly confess the word of God, that does not lead his life according to the gospel, that does not call upon God in all necessity, that does not willingly and gladly give thanks to God for all his benefits; he despises God, and his holy name, and gives occasion to others to do the like, which of all other is the greatest offence to God. Therefore we ought to pray that God keep and defend us from this sin.

This is the meaning and plain understanding of this petition. The name of God is of itself holy; but in this petition we desire that we may also hallow it, which we do, when the word of God is purely and sincerely taught, when we walk and live according to the gospel. This grant us, O heavenly Father. For he that teaches other doctrine than the pure word of God, he dishonours and defiles the word of God. Wherefore from this sin, good Lord, defend us.

Learn these things diligently, good children; and when you are asked, How understand you this first petition? you shall answer, The name of God of itself is holy, but here we do ask, that it may be hallowed of us. And when you are asked, How is it hallowed of us? Answer, When the word of God is purely and sincerely taught; when we lead our life in this world holily and godly, as it becomes the very true children of God. Here in this point, succour us, good Lord, help us, O heavenly Father. For he, that either teaches or lives otherwise than the word of God requires, he dishonours and pollutes the word of God.

The general conclusion in all Sermons of the Lord's Prayer.

Thus you have heard, good children, the sum and mind of this first, (second, third, &c.) petition. Keep this in your memory, and cease not to make your prayer unto the Lord, nothing doubting, but he will hear you and make you holy and very godly, as the true children of God,

without fault, who have their Father in heaven. For He hath promised to grant us whatsoever we ask in his name. And in His name we ask, whensoever we say his prayer, and use the same form of prayer which he prescribed unto us, and commanded us so to pray. Therefore we ought to believe in our hearts that God doth hear us, for so much as he is our Father. For when we give faith unto his promises, then surely he hears us, and by our prayer we trust to obtain that which we ask, and to obey and perform such things as he hath commanded, which God grant us all. Amen.

Thy kingdom come.

Before, you heard in the first petition how we pray in it, that God will grant us that we may fulfil the second commandment, that is to say, that we take not the name of God in vain, but that it may be sanctified and honoured by us.

Now follows the second petition, wherein we pray that God will grant us strength to fulfil the third commandment, which is reverently to use and to hallow the Sabbath-day, which is not done by resting only from all outward bodily labours, but it is chiefly done, when we mortify the desires of the flesh, diligently hear the word of God, and obey the same in our hearts, which we cannot do without a special and singular grace and favour of God. Therefore we have need fervently to pray, even as Christ hath taught us in this second petition, "Thy kingdom come."

That you may understand these words rightly and justly, take good diligent heed, that you may learn what that kingdom is which you ask for. The kingdom of God, as St. Paul saith, Rom. xiv. is justice, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And although these words, peradventure, seem unto you hard and dark, yet you shall understand them, if you take good heed. You know that emperors and kings in this world, have their realms and kingdoms, and those people that are within their lands and dominions, and duly obey their laws and commandments, those are their true and faithful subjects of their realms. And every king gives commandments unto his subjects, and governs them, so that they do not every man what he list himself, but what it pleases his prince to command him.

Even so, almighty God has here in earth, in his church,

a heavenly kingdom; and this kingdom, which Christ in his gospel so often calls the kingdom of heaven, begins among his faithful people in this world. And all that truly believe and keep his commandments, pertain unto this kingdom. And when God, by his gospel, begins to call us unto this kingdom, then the kingdom of God comes unto us and begins in us. For God begins, and indeed is the King and Lord of them that are godly. He governs and rules them, so that they work not after the lusts and desires of their own flesh, but as the Lord God, who is their King, teaches and commands them by his word.

God causes his gospel to be preached unto us, how Christ for our sakes suffered death, was buried, and rose again, as you before heard in the Creed. Moreover, he opens our hearts, and gives us faith to believe his gospel. And to them that believe his gospel, he gives the Holy Ghost, who governs us, and leads us into all truth.

For first, By faith we are justified before God, for faith makes us partakers of the justice of Christ, and plants us in Christ, and he that by true faith receives the promise of grace, to him God gives the Holy Ghost, by whom charity is spread abroad in our hearts, which performs all the commandments. Therefore, he that believes in Christ, and truly believes the gospel, he is just and holy before God, by the justice of Christ, which is imputed and given unto him, as Paul saith: We think that man is justified by faith without works. He is also just before the world, because of the love and charity which the Holy Ghost works in his heart.

Secondly, Faith worketh peace and quietness in our hearts and consciences. For by faith we are certified that our sins are forgiven. Therefore saith St. Paul to the Romans, Being justified, we have peace and quietness with God, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, This peace brings unto us a great and singular joy in our hearts and consciences, and makes us, for this exceeding benefit of God's mercy and grace towards us, fervently to love him, gladly to laud and praise him, to honour his name, and to profess the same before all the world, evermore to give unto him most hearty thanks, and to be swift and ready to do all things that may please God, and to eschew those things that may displease him.

This, good children, is the kingdom of God, when by the gospel and the Holy Ghost, God reigneth in our hearts,

when he worketh in us our justification, that we, having peace of conscience, may have joy and comfort in the Holy Ghost, of the abundance and plentifulness of grace, and the benefits of Christ. And this is that thing which St. Paul speaks of to the Romans: The kingdom of God is justice, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Now as an earthly king governs his subjects by his laws and commandments, and by his might and power, so doth God rule and govern his church and true faithful people, who although they are here in earth, yet they are of his heavenly kingdom,—such, I say, he governs by the holy word of his gospel, and the power of the Holy Ghost, whom he pours plentifully upon all them that believe the gospel; and by that comfortable word of the gospel he gently draweth us unto him, that we should gladly of our own free will obey him. For God loves not service constrained by force, such as slaves and bondmen do, more for fear than love, but he would have his people to serve him willingly, of heart and love, as David said in the 110th psalm.

And this is the aforesaid kingdom of God, when he in such wise reigns in us and governs us, that we do not work after our own wills, but in body and mind do cease and rest from our own evil works and shrewd* wills, and follow the working of God and the Holy Ghost in us. And this is to sanctify the sabbath-day, that is to say, to keep a holy rest, when we honour God with true honour, when we hear diligently the word of God, when we yield ourselves clearly to God, that his Holy Spirit may work in us holy, godly, and heavenly works, that is to say, justice, peace, comfort, and other works of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, he that prayeth thus, Thy kingdom come, he prayeth nothing else, but that God will give us grace, that we may rest from our own proper wills, that we do not those things that delight the body and please our appetites, but that we may suffer God by his holy word and Spirit to work in us holy works, that so the third commandment may be fulfilled, Remember, that thou sanctify the sabbath-day. For so doth Isaiah declare this commandment, saying, If thou work not after thine own will in my holy day, then thou shalt be called a pleasant rest to sanctify and honour the Lord. If thou honour him so, that thou work not after thine own ways, nor find the

* Mischievous.

means to follow thine own will, nor speak thine own pleasure, then shalt thou have pleasure in the Lord. For all these things therefore, good children, ought you to pray to God, that his kingdom may come, that he will here in earth begin his kingdom in us, that we may obey him in such wise as ye have heard.

Now the kingdom of God cometh unto us two manner of ways: First, by his word and faith when the gospel is preached unto us, that our Lord Jesus Christ delivered us from sin, death, and hell, by his cross, death, and resurrection. For by the preaching of his word we learn to put our trust in God and to love God. And this knowledge and faith in Christ increase from time to time, not only in them that have but newly begun to believe; but they also who many years have professed Christ, do profit in the same faith more and more. For their faith and love towards God, by the daily preaching of the gospel, is confirmed and made more strong.

Secondly, the kingdom of God shall come to us at the last day, when the everlasting glory and kingdom of God shall be revealed, when at the last day we shall be raised from death to life, and be received into the kingdom of heaven, where we shall be made perfectly just, holy, and safe for ever, which, so long as we are here in this world, is hid from us, and appears not clearly unto us; but at that last day shall appear to all men that exceeding joy which no tongue is able to express. As saith St. John in his canonical epistle, Yet it appeareth not what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like unto him, and we shall see him even as he is.

All these things our Lord God causes to be preached in the whole world, of his mere goodness and most abundant mercy, not for our works or merits, but before we desired him. But although it be preached through the world, yet it would not avail us, if we believed not; that is to say, if he came not into our hearts, if the kingdom of God were not within us. Therefore must we with all diligence pray, that God not only may make this to be preached, but also that he will give faith, not only to others, but also to ourselves.

And shortly, this is the sum of this petition: That God, by his sincere preachers, will send his word and gospel of Christ, and by his Holy Spirit bring us to the faith, and obedience to God, and daily increase the same. And then

utterly to abolish and take away from us the rest of the world, which is wicked and disobedient, with all their sin and wickedness, and to receive us into his eternal kingdom and glory.

This is the meaning and plain understanding of this second petition. The kingdom of God cometh of itself, without our prayer, but here we pray that it may come to us; which cometh to pass when the heavenly Father giveth us his Spirit, to believe his holy word, to live well and godly, here in his church for a time, and after in heaven for ever.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Ye have heard, how in the former petitions we require of our Lord God, to give us all things that pertain to his glory and to the kingdom of heaven, whereof he hath given us commandment in the three* precepts written in the first table. Now follows the third petition, wherein we pray God to grant us that we may fulfil the other seven† commandments also, which treat of matters concerning this worldly kingdom and transitory life; that is to say, to honour our parents and governors, to kill no man, not to commit adultery, to abstain from theft and lying, and to behave ourselves in all things, obediently, honestly, peaceably, and godly. And these are the words of this petition, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

And to the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall know, that there are two manner of kingdoms. The first is, the kingdom of God or of heaven, whereof we spake in the second petition. The other is an earthly or worldly kingdom, of which you shall now hear. Now our Lord God is the chief ruler and governor in both these kingdoms. In the kingdom of heaven he so reigns, that he begins in us here, in this world, the kingdom of everlasting life and salvation. And the worldly kingdoms he so governs, that here he gives us peace and quietness, that we may hear and learn the kingdom of God, and so attain the kingdom of heaven. And God hath ordained in this earthly kingdom, common officers and rulers under him, whom he hath appointed for this purpose, that they should in his name govern the common people, and labour with all diligence, that peace and quiet-

* Four. † Six.

ness may be maintained in the same. And he hath given them the authority of the sword, that they should not only therewith defend the godly, but also punish malefactors and breakers of the common peace and quietness, as traitors, rebellious, manslayers, adulterers, thieves, and false witness bearers, and all wrong doers to other men, according to the saying of St. Paul in the 13th chapter to the Romans: Let every soul submit himself unto the higher powers; for there is no power but that cometh of God. And the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the superior powers, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, do purchase to themselves damnation. For the rulers are not fearful to them that do good, but to them that do evil. Wilt thou be without fear of the powers? Do well then, and so shalt thou be praised of the same. For he is the minister of God for thy welfare. But if thou do evil, then fear, for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God to punish him that doeth evil. Wherefore you must needs obey, not only for fear of punishment, but also for very conscience.

By these words you may well perceive, good children, that it is God's will and pleasure that we should lead here, in this world, an honest and quiet life, and that they which are seditious, and full of trouble and unquietness in the commonwealth, should be punished. And upon these considerations he hath given us these commandments: Honour thy father and mother.—Thou shalt not kill.—Thou shalt not commit adultery.—Thou shalt not steal.—Thou shalt bear no false witness against thy neighbour.—Thou shalt not desire any thing that is thy neighbour's. And God hath commanded the governors of commonwealths to punish such as do not obey these commandments; and he himself will punish them also. Wherefore, let such as are disobedient look for punishment, not only of the governors here, in the sight of the world, but also of God himself. And the governors who, according to God's commandment, do correct and punish offenders, they do worship God highly, and do him a pleasant and acceptable sacrifice. And God hath ordained the higher powers, and quietness to be in commonwealths, that thereby we might hear and learn the gospel more easily and quietly. For where war and sedition are, there is not the place to preach the word of God with fruit and profit. For

the which cause St. Paul, writing to Timothy, saith, I charge you, that prayers and supplications be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and a peaceable life, with all godliness and honesty. For this is good and accepted in the sight of God our Saviour, who willeth all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, therefore, forasmuch as we know by God's holy commandments what his will is, it is our part to conform our wills to his will, and to desire him to give us his grace and aid to accomplish his most holy will, saying, as Christ has taught us, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." And because the will of God, whereby he requires here in earth obedience to laws and governors, is expressed very plainly in the seven latter commandments before rehearsed, therefore, whensoever you will make this prayer to God, and say, Thy will, good Lord, be done in earth as it is in heaven, you must before call to your remembrance these seven commandments, with their exposition, unto you heretofore declared. For in this short request you comprise as much as if you should pray on this fashion:

O God, our most merciful Father in heaven, give us thy grace and help, that we may obey our parents and common officers, and honour them with all our hearts; keep us from manslaughter, from envy, hatred, malice, anger, desire of revenging, and all evil minds towards our neighbours. Grant that we may heartily love our neighbours, and do them good both in words and deeds. Grant us to live purely and chastely, to avoid all occasions of offence, to provoke nobody to unclean living; but that we may study to save every man's and woman's chastity and honesty. Grant that neither by theft, guile, nor any crafty means, we take a bribe, or keep away any man's goods from him; but rather that we may help them to save and keep their riches, and if any of them be in poverty, that we may be willing to relieve them with our alms and charity. Grant that we may hurt no man with false witness bearing or lying, but that we may both judge and speak all goodness of our neighbour. Keep us from all evil lusts and desires, that we covet not our neighbour's goods, nor hawk or hunt after any thing that is his. For all these are the commandments of thy holy and godly will, to which thou hast commanded us to be obedient.

And mark well these words, I pray you, good children, that we do not only pray God, that his will may be done, but also we desire that it may be fulfilled here, of men in earth, even as it is of the angels in heaven. Now the angels in heaven fulfil God's will most perfectly, both with most fervent love and most perfect obedience.

And there is not in any of the heavenly spirits any evil desire to do any thing contrary to God's will, but they are wholly inflamed with most perfect love towards God. Even so ought we also to be that dwell here in earth. But the weakness and evil of man's heart is so great, that we are not able to perform the same.

For oftentimes we obey God's will nothing at all, but give ourselves wholly to the lusts of our flesh: oftentimes we do what God requireth of us, grudgingly, coldly, and, as it were, half against our wills. This is a great feebleness, or rather a horrible sickness, leprosy, corruption, and pestilent contagion of original sin; by means whereof they that are most holy here in earth, are not perfectly just and righteous, but ever they want many things that belong to their perfection. We must therefore continually pray to God to give us his grace and help, that we may fulfil his holy will, and be made as just and obedient as the angels which are in heaven.

Furthermore, good children, ye shall note, that when we say, Thy will be done, we do not only pray for ourselves, but for others also, that both we and they may do the holy will of God. And when any man goeth about to do any ungodly thing, which is against God's will, then we pray in this petition, that God would hinder his naughty purpose, that God's will only may be done. This prayer also is against the devil, and this most corrupt world, that neither the devil's will, neither the will of the wicked world, may be done. For when we hear the gospel preached unto us, and give credit to it, and frame our lives and conversation after the same, then Satan rages and is sorely grieved and vexed, then he calleth all his wits unto him, and setteth all his study and craft to stir up false and brain-sick doctors, to sow the cockle of heresy and erroneous opinions, where the good seed of God's word was first sown. Then he is busy to raise up persecutions, seditions, insurrections, commotions, wars, and blasphemies, whereby he may hinder the word of God to

have its course, and may trouble the kingdom of Christ. And Satan is not alone, when he fights against Christ and his kingdom, but he hath on his side this false and deceivable world, and also our own flesh, which do not cease to entice and move us against God's most holy will.

But when we say in the Lord's Prayer, Thy will be done; then we do not only pray that both we and others may keep God's holy commandments, but we pray also that the most naughty will of the devil and corrupt world may be broken, and only the will of God may be fulfilled, that in commonwealths may be peace and quietness, the gospel freely and fruitfully preached, and that we may lead in this world holy and godly lives. And forasmuch as Christ our Lord hath commanded us thus to pray, and hath promised that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, he will give it unto us, we ought steadfastly to believe and nothing doubt, but that he will stay all the crafty imaginations and compassings of the world and the devil, and defend us against all persecutions, that we may keep and learn his word in peace and quietness.

Wherefore, our duty is steadfastly to cleave to the gospel, diligently to study and learn the word of God, and constantly, without fear, to confess and abide by the same. For Christ himself saith, He that confesseth me before men, I will also confess and acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But he that denieth me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven. Also, good children, you shall diligently learn this lesson, which I pray you to print well in your memories, that in this petition we yield ourselves wholly to God, to be ordered after his will and pleasure, and willingly bear whatsoever cross or trouble he shall lay upon our shoulders. For we pray that his will may be done, then we forsake our own will, and make a whole resignation thereof into God's hands that it may not take effect, which of itself desires nothing but health of body, riches, honours, rest, and quietness; whereas God's will is contrary, that oftentimes we should be tried in our faith by adversities, and bear our cross, as our Lord and Master, Christ, was crowned with thorns and nailed on the cross for our sakes. This St. Paul witnesses, writing these words, Whom God hath chosen before the beginning of the world, them also hath he ordained to

be like the image of his Son. And our Saviour Christ himself saith, He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy to be my disciple.

And this is not a token of God's anger, when he sends us affliction or adversity, but rather a sign of his love towards us. For He chastiseth every child whom he loveth, as the wise man Solomon witnesses. And they that feel not His rod, are not his true children, but rather bastards, as St. Paul writes in the epistle to the Hebrews. Wherefore, good children, learn patience, that you may gladly suffer adversity. For correction is a teaching. And when God shall try your faith with sickness, poverty, persecution, or any other kind of adversity, rejoice and be glad. For these are evident tokens of God's fatherly love toward you, and that he will keep you clean from sin and corruption of this world, and bridle your will, that you may learn to know God's holy will, which is a wonderful wisdom. And therefore St. Paul so many times repeats in his epistles these words, that is to say, that you may know the will of God. For this knowledge is a most high and heavenly wisdom and obedience, most like to the obedience and holiness of the angels in heaven. And you are bound to obey God in suffering his rod and cross. For God, in our baptism, hath made this covenant with us, that we must die and be buried with Christ, and be grafted into his passion and death, if we will rise again and be glorified with him in the kingdom of heaven, whereunto he is risen and ascended. Wherefore, good children, mark well these lessons, that you may learn patience in all afflictions and adversities, whether you suffer sickness, poverty, reproaches, or persecution for the gospel. And whatsoever kind of adversity troubles you, persuade yourselves for a surety that it is God's will that you should suffer and be tried. And therefore Christ saith, One hair shall not fall from your head without the will of your Father which is in heaven.

Therefore, if at any time you shall be moved to impatience in your trouble and adversity, then with all your hearts call upon God for his aid and succour, desire him to send you the gift of patience, and say, Thy will, good Lord, be done, and not ours. For so our Saviour Christ hath not only taught us to pray, but he himself also did use the like prayer, not long before he suffered his passion. And this is the plain meaning of this third petition

concerning the fulfilling of God's will. Now I pray you, good children, apply your wills and minds to learn the same, that when you are asked, How understand you the third petition? you may answer after this manner: Although God's holy will be done without our prayer, yet we pray that it may be done in us, and fulfilled among us here in earth.

Which is done, when God overthrows and destroys the wicked counsels of the devil, of worldly people, and of our own flesh, which do all that lieth in them to hinder the kingdom of God and the hallowing of his name, and keeps us in the true knowledge of his word, in the lively faith of Christ, in his love and obedience of his commandments. For this is the holy and perfect will of God, which God grant us to keep now and ever. Amen.

Give us this day our daily bread.

You have heard how in the former petitions we desire of God to give us all things that belong to the fulfilling of his holy commandments, that we may lead a godly life as well towards God, as also toward our neighbours. Whereby we are evidently taught, that we are not able to fulfil the law and commandments of God without the grace of Christ and God's help. Now follow the other four petitions, in the which we pray God that he will vouchsafe to give us all those things which are promised unto us in the gospel, and which our creed teaches us to look for.

And first, In this fourth petition we sue to God to grant us all those things which we are taught to believe in the first part of our creed concerning our creation. For when we say, Give us this day our daily bread, we pray to God that as through his great mercy and goodness he did create us, so he will likewise nourish and feed us. Wherefore, good children, if you will understand this petition, you must call to your remembrance those lessons which were taught you in the first article of our belief, treating of the creation. For, seeing that God hath made heaven and earth, he is Lord and Master of all creatures in heaven or earth, and all are under his will and pleasure. And forasmuch as he made them all for us, he hath appointed them all to serve us, and to help and relieve our necessities. Wherefore, let us not be careful for meat or drink, or other things necessary for our living. But let us put our confidence in God

our Father, who hath made us, and given us our lives, and we may be sure that he will also send us all things necessary for the preservation and maintenance of the same. For, seeing that he made all creatures of nothing, it must needs be, that all creatures obey his will and commandment. And in case there were not in the world creatures sufficient to nourish us, yet we should not mistrust him, for he is able to make new creatures, to give us all things necessary. And to the intent that no man should trust in himself, thinking that by his own wisdom or labour he is able to get all things necessary to the maintenance of his life, Christ hath taught us to ask those things of our heavenly Father, who only is able to preserve and feed us. Of him, therefore, ought we heartily to ask the same, saying, Give us this day our daily bread. For this tends to the glory of God, and singularly pleases him when we ask of him all things necessary for us. And for this cause God hath commanded us to pray continually without ceasing.

And our Saviour Christ hath promised us that he will give us all things which we shall ask in his name. And it is evident by the words of this petition, that we ought oftentimes to pray. For Christ hath not taught us to ask our sustenance for fifty or threescore years, nor yet for one year, no nor for one month, or week; but he hath willed us to ask our daily bread. And he saith, Be not careful for to-morrow, for to-morrow bringeth care enough of itself.

Now, if we shall not be careful for to-morrow, but only require of God sustenance necessary for the present day, it is manifest hereby, that it is God's will that we should ask again of him to-morrow. For we shall have as much need of meat and drink to-morrow, as we have this present day, and yet we pray not for to-morrow's food, but for this day's sustenance only. Wherefore, good children, accustom yourselves, from your tender age, to pray gladly and often; for that pleases God, and he is very ready to give you all things that you need, so that we give him his due honour, and ask of him as our duty is. But especially they that be godly must pray when they go to bed, when they rise, when they go to the church, or sit down at the table. For these times are chiefly appointed to prayer, as scripture doth witness in many places.

And, forasmuch as we are not able to get our daily bread

by our own wit,* labour, and diligence, except God give it us, let us therefore, before all things, seek his kingdom, and study to please him, that he may give us all things necessary for us.

And although many men in this world get their living and riches by craft and deceit, yet let us abstain from such unlawful means. For they rather bring poverty to a man, than riches. And although bribers, extortioners, usurers, and crafty deceivers of their neighbours, prosper for a while in this world; yet they seldom establish their things. For it is written, that scarcely the third heir shall enjoy goods ill gotten. And God doth only wink at them, suffering them to flourish for a time, that afterward he may the more grievously punish and suddenly destroy them. And when we desire God to give us our daily bread, think not, good children, that our heavenly Father will give us only a morsel of bread and nothing beside; but under the name of bread are all things contained which are necessary to the maintenance of our life, as meat, drink, apparel, house, lands, cattle, and money, according to the saying of St. Paul, God giveth all things to our use, richly and abundantly. But Christ teaches us in this petition to ask only for our daily bread, for this intent, that we should be content with such a mean as our daily use and necessity requires, and that we should not, by over-much eating and drinking, wastefully spend those things, wherewith poor people might be relieved. For St. Paul commands us to labour and work, that we may eat our own bread, and also give to them that have need. Which commandment we shall easily keep, if we will be content with a mean diet, and keep a measure in our apparel. But they that delight in superfluity of gorgeous apparel and dainty fare, and make pleasure the end of their eating and drinking, and not necessity, they are not wont to give much to the poor; but commonly such deceive the needy, bribe and pyle from them,† and oftentimes by plain robberies and force do steal other men's goods, that they may have wherewith to maintain their charges and sumptuous expenses. As we see by daily experience that covetous persons, and the rich men of this world who are given to riot and superfluity, use to give little or nothing at all to the poor.

Furthermore, in this petition we do not only desire our bodily food and sustenance, but also all things necessary

* Understanding. † Pillage them.

to the same, whereby we may use and enjoy such as God hath sent us; that is to say, we pray for seasonable weather and wholesomeness of the air, for health of body, for peace and quietness of the commonwealth, for trusty and faithful servants, and such like. For except God send fair and seasonable weather, all the fruits and corn growing upon the earth are like to perish, and so all our labour in ploughing, sowing, and planting shall be bestowed in vain. Also he that hath not his health can have no pleasure in his riches, or greatly joy in his meat or drink, be it ever so dainty. Furthermore in war time, although God send us great plenty of corn and wine, yet all is destroyed of our enemies, so much that we may hardly trust our friends from spoiling of us. For then all is full of robbing, burning, beating, killing, and wasting with fire and sword. And if we have any thing left us in the time of war, yet we cannot quietly have the use of it for fear, care, and trouble of the wars.

And if it be a time of peace, yet if thou have an enemy within the walls of thine own house, that is to say, if thou have an unkind or unfaithful wife, unthrifty children, untrusty and negligent servants, then by them thy living is wasted and consumed. For all these do defraud thee of thy daily bread, and are the occasion of thy great loss and hinderance. The principal cause of all these adversities is the devil. For he is so mortal an enemy to mankind, that he is desirous, not only to destroy our souls with false doctrines and erroneous opinions, but also through tempests, infection of the air, divers kinds of sicknesses, by famine, battle, by the malice and falsehood of our own household and of our neighbours, he would fain consume our life, health, house, and goods, and clearly destroy them. And this wicked spirit would overthrow in a moment of an hour whole realms and commonwealths, if God did not hinder him. Wherefore we must earnestly pray to God, that he will stay this wicked spirit, and give us our daily bread, that he will preserve us from all sickness, that, having health of our bodies, we may use and enjoy our substance. And that also he will send us godly and diligent rulers, to defend us from our enemies, and to provide, that neither our goods be stolen from us by thieves or robbers, nor lost or conveyed from us through the untrustiness or falseness of our household servants.

Furthermore, you shall note, good children, that our

Lord Jesus Christ hath not taught us to say, Father, give me my daily bread, but Give us our daily bread: and likewise in all the petitions that follow, no man prayeth in the singular number for himself alone, but in the plural number, as well for others as for himself. By the which lesson we are admonished of the brotherly charity, which one of us should bear towards another. For we are all offenders, and from our birth the children of wrath. Nevertheless, God so loved us, that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death for us, to obtain for us remission of our sins, to reconcile us to him, and to make us his children. Therefore now is God our Father and Christ our brother, and we are God's children, and heirs and coinheritors with Christ, and among ourselves we are brethren, and all brethren to Christ. And therefore we ought to join all together in one prayer, and to be glad one to help another, both in word and deed, to the uttermost of our power.

Furthermore, this is a great comfort for us to know that all the church and congregation of Christ pray for us, and that all the treasures of God's riches, that is to say, Christ himself, the kingdom of heaven, the holy gospel, the sacraments, and the prayers of all godly men are common to us all. For whensoever any godly man requires any good thing of God, he also requires the same for us, for no man ought to pray for himself alone. And this is a great consolation for all christian people. For the scripture saith, that the prayer of one just man may do much with God. And therefore, when many just and godly men make their supplications unto God with one accord, we may be sure that their prayers are heard.

And this is the plain sense and exposition of this fourth petition. Now, good children, I pray you diligently to remember these things, that when you are asked this question, How understand you the fourth petition? you may answer, God sufficiently provides for us meat and drink without our desire, nevertheless we desire him to grant us that we may know that we have all things at his hands, and that we may give to him due thanks for the same. And if further any man will ask you what is meant by this word, "our daily bread?" you shall answer, that by daily bread is understood all things necessary for our living, as meat, drink, clothes, house, land, cattle, money, household stuff, a good wife, obedient children, trusty

servants, good governors, a well-ordered commonwealth, common peace, and tranquillity, seasonable weather, wholesome air, health of body, constant friends, honest neighbours, and such-like things, whereby we may lead in this world a godly and quiet life.

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US.

You have heard how we desire of God our Father, that, forasmuch as he is the only and true Maker of heaven and earth, he will vouchsafe to preserve and nourish us his children, and that we ought to trust for this of no creature, but of God only, as you have learned in the first article of our Creed, which treats of the creation. Now follows the fifth petition, in which we desire God to give us all that we have learned in the second part of our Creed, which speaks of our redemption, and teaches us, how by the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are delivered from sin, death, and hell, that with joy and mirth we may look for that day, in which he shall judge both the quick and the dead. The words of this petition are these, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

To the intent, good children, that you may the better understand this petition, you shall call to your remembrance that lesson which you learned a little before, that is to say, that Christ hath promised that he will give us all things which we ask in faith and true belief. Now true faith is grounded upon the promise of God, and it is not builded but upon the foundation of his word. Wherefore, if we will ask any thing in true belief, we must ask as the word of God teaches us, and we must take sure hold of God's promise declared in the scripture. For it is not faith, to believe our own fancies or dreams, of the which God hath not spoken or taught. As, if a man would believe that by God's help he should not be drowned, although he leaped into the sea, this were no faith, but a temptation of God, a very heinous sin, coming doubtless of the devil, who thus tempted our Master, Christ, when he set him upon the pinnacle of the temple in the holy city, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down. But Christ refused so to do, and answered thus, It is written, Thou shalt not tempt thy Lord God.

Now there is not in the whole scripture any one promise that God will help me if I do any such act; but if we do such things as God hath commanded us, he hath made us many promises, that he will aid and succour us in all our necessities and troubles. By which promises he hath declared his fatherly love towards us, intending thereby to stir and provoke us to run unto him in all our cares and needs. Wherefore it is our bounden duty to call upon his name in all our necessities, to trust upon his promises, to put him, as it were, in remembrance of them, and earnestly to desire him to perform the same. But among all other promises, this promise is specially to be remembered where Christ promises thus: If ye will forgive men their trespasses, my heavenly Father also will forgive you your trespasses. But if you will not forgive men their trespasses, then will not my heavenly Father forgive you. In which promise, Christ doth not only offer unto us remission of our sins and such things as appertain to everlasting life, but also he promises us hereby peace and quietness in this transitory life, with concord and a loving heart toward our neighbour. And according to this promise, Christ our Master hath taught us to pray after this sort, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. For it were not reasonable, nor agreeing to justice, that we should require God to forgive us our trespasses against him, when we are not minded to forgive our neighbours their offences against us. God would never hear us, if we should so pray. For if we have causes why we will not forgive our neighbours, then surely God hath both more and more weighty causes, wherefore he will not forgive us. So that if God were minded to forgive us our sins, yet if we be not minded to forgive our neighbours, he would stay, and, as it were, call again this his purpose, by the reason of our uncharitableness and disobedience, as Christ himself plainly teaches us, by the example of the servant, who, after he had his debt forgiven him, was compelled to pay all the money, whereof before he was discharged by his master's pardon, because he would not forgive his fellow.

Wherefore, good children, accustom yourselves, even from your tender age, gladly to forgive them that have offended you. Be not desirous to revenge your own quarrels, and then your heavenly Father will also forgive you. If you be angry, sin not; nor let the sun set upon your

anger; for it is not possible that any man can truly believe, that God hath forgiven him his sins, when he himself is not willing to forgive his neighbour. Wherefore God, our heavenly Father, did not intend to hurt or hinder us, when he said, that he would not forgive us, except we forgive others; and if we forgive our neighbours their offences, that then he will also forgive us. But God did knit this condition to this promise for our great good and benefit: for under these words there lies hid great comfort for troubled consciences, whereunto if you will listen diligently, you shall know the singular goodness of God, and his fatherly love towards you. It is not unknown to God how hard a thing it is for us to believe that God, freely and for his mere mercy, will pardon us when we have offended him.

Wherefore he hath added to his promise this token, whereby we might be assured that he hath forgiven us, that is to say, when we forgive our neighbours. For although it be hard to forgive our neighbours their offences against us, yet more hard it is to believe that God hath forgiven us. Let us therefore lay aside all anger and displeasure, and accustom ourselves gladly to forgive our neighbours, that thereby we may the sooner believe, that our Lord God hath forgiven us. For God is much more inclined and ready to mercy than we mortal men. Moreover, the forgiving of our neighbour, not only establishes our faith, that our sins are forgiven of God, but also it nourishes peace, concord, and brotherly charity. For if we should not much forbear and forgive one another, but every man should study how he might be revenged of his neighbour for every matter, either by force, or else by subtlety, then we should never have measure nor end of chiding, scolding, lying in watch one of another, deceiving, lawing, fighting, and such-like; then farewell all quietness, peace, concord, and good order.

And this revenging of ourselves should greatly hurt us, both in our body, soul, good name, honour, and riches, as experience daily teaches us. For oftentimes we see, that while a man goes to law for two or three crowns, he spends twenty or thirty. And many men are killed themselves while they go about to strike or wound others. Wherefore, it is much better one of us to forgive another, than to provoke and increase the anger and malice one of another.

And as we do not all things which we ought to do,

then we are ever debtors and sinners in something. But God forgives us these debts for Christ's sake, when we pray to him therefore, and forgive our neighbours for his sake. And this is the cause why we cannot be justified or delivered from sin, death, and hell, by our own works. For inasmuch as our good works are ever imperfect, and have need of pardon, therefore we must needs be redeemed by the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ, as it hath been taught you in that part of the Creed which treats of our redemption. Wherefore, inasmuch as, according to our Creed, we believe that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us all our sins and debts, we ought also earnestly to pray, that he will deal with us according to our faith, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And this is the plain understanding of this fifth petition, which we daily and hourly ought to make to God. And now I pray you, good children, that you will diligently record the true meaning of this petition: and when you are asked this question, How understand you the fifth petition? answer and say, Herein we desire that our heavenly Father will not look upon our sins, and for them cast us away. For we have not deserved those great gifts and grace which we desire at God's hands; we are not worthy to have the same; but we desire God, that although we daily offend him, and deserve grievous punishments for our sins, yet he of his mere grace and mercy will hear our prayers, and freely forgive us our offences. And we offer ourselves for his sake, from the bottom of our hearts, to forgive them that have offended us.

And suffer us not to be led into temptation.

Now you have heard how in the fifth petition we desire God to give us all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ hath deserved for us by his passion, death, and glorious resurrection; that is to say, forgiveness of our sins and all thereto belonging, even as we forgive them that have offended us, as you have learned in the second part of the Creed, which treats of our redemption. Now therefore follows the sixth petition, in which we pray that God will give us all things which we have learned in the third part of the Creed, which treats of our sanctification: that is to say, we desire that God will vouchsafe to send us the Holy Ghost, who may assist us in our continual

battle against sin, the flesh, the world, and the devil; that in all temptations and skirmishes with the same, we may manfully withstand them and overcome them. For this we desire when we say, And suffer us not to be led into temptation. And to the intent that ye may the better understand this petition, ye shall first diligently learn this lesson, that although sin is forgiven us by Christ, yet it is not wholly purged or driven out of us, but sin yet sticketh fast in our flesh, which tempts and provokes us to do against God's commandments: for ye have already learned by the ten commandments, what sin is, and what is very ungodliness, to the intent ye may eschew it. Also you have heard in your Creed, that God forgives us our sins, and no more condemns us for the same, when we believe in the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ. But yet, nevertheless, we feel the temptations of sin, which cleaves to us like glue. And that this is true, every one of you doth feel in yourselves by daily experience; for when you grudge to do that which your parents command you to do, then sin tempts you and provokes you to stubbornness and disobedience toward your father and mother. But yield not to this temptation, but obey your father and mother, as God hath commanded you. Likewise when you see other children have any gay thing, which pleases you so well that you would fain have the same, then sin tempts and moves you, either by force or by stealth, or else by some crafty means, to pick it from them, and so to deceive your neighbour. But it is your part to withstand this temptation, and to keep God's commandment, which saith, Thou shalt not steal. And after this sort we are tempted in the other commandments of God also, and tried whether we will be obedient unto them or no. But we must strive against temptation, and manfully withstand the same, that we do nothing against God's commandment. Now when we will resist temptation, and not obey the same, but keep the commandments of God, then we must have the help and assistance of the Holy Ghost; for without the Holy Ghost no man can be righteous and good. And for this cause also he is called the Holy Ghost, because he maketh men righteous, pure, and holy; and God doth give the Holy Ghost to all them which do believe with all their heart in Jesus Christ our Lord. For by this token St. Paul teaches us to know that we have the Holy Ghost: No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the

Holy Ghost. And St. John, in his canonical epistle, writes thus: When we do truly confess Jesus Christ to be our Lord, then we are born of God, and have his Holy Spirit.

Wherefore, good children, believe with all your hearts, that Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, died, and rose again for you; that he hath purchased forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for you; and that he is so your Lord, that you shall be sure to dwell with him in everlasting life. Furthermore, ye shall believe that Christ giveth you the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies you, helps and assists you, that you be not led into temptation, but that ye may obey God, as you have heard in the ten commandments. And as long as we live here upon earth, we must not look to be void of temptations.

For all our life in this world is subject to divers temptations. Sometimes the flesh tempts us, sometimes the false and deceitful world, sometimes the devil tempts us, who hath ever had a most fervent desire to do us hurt. And all the temptations of these our enemies level at this point—to bring us to do against God's commandments. But it is our part manfully to withstand such temptations, that we assent not to any evil. And yet we are not able to withstand these our enemies, unless God help us by the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, whensoever we are tempted to do any thing against God's commandment, there is no better remedy than to call for God's help, and to say as Christ taught us, Good Lord, suffer us not to be led into temptation. For when we do so, God heareth our prayers; he sendeth the Holy Ghost, and helpeth us, that we be not led into temptation.

And now, good children, that you may the better withstand such temptations, you shall here learn, that there are three kinds of temptations. The first is the temptation of the flesh, as when we are tempted to do any thing which is pleasant to the flesh, and yet it is sinful. As when the flesh provokes us to lechery, adultery, drunkenness, and such like: or when we are tempted to leave anything undone, which is painful and grievous to the flesh, and yet of itself it is holy and righteous; as when we suffer afflictions against our will, when we do not gladly fast, when we do not gladly give alms, fearing lest we should our ownselves want, and not have enough to maintain our pride and pleasures.

The second temptation is of the world, as when, through evil company, we are corrupted in our own living, and provoked to follow naughty examples. Also when we swerve from that which is right and honest, for fear of persecution, displeasure, indignation, or threatening of men; or, when men, through their falsehood, malice, or craft, move us to anger, envy, or hatred.

The third temptation is of the devil, as when we feel in our hearts sudden and vehement motions to do evil, and yet neither the flesh nor the world provoke us to the same; but evil thoughts do so suddenly come into our minds, that we ourselves do not well know from whence they came. Such evil thoughts, no doubt of it, come from the devil; for the devil is a spirit whom we can neither feel nor see; wherefore he can set our hearts on fire so suddenly, that we shall not know from whence such sudden fire and sparks do come. Also when the flesh and the world do tempt us, then Satan also takes occasion thereby to enter in at the gate which they have set open for him, and makes their temptation so strong, that it is hard for us to withstand and overcome the same. And all these temptations, good children, are against God's commandments: wherefore, hereby you shall learn to know what is temptation; for when any thing comes into your mind, by which you are provoked to do against God's commandment, that is temptation. Wherefore beware you do not the same, but desire of God help and assistance against temptation. For in this standeth a christian and holy life, that, as our sins are forgiven us by Christ, so we ought ever to withstand sin, that we suffer it not to enter into us, or to reign over us; for what a monstrous thing should the christian religion be, if we that are christian men, who confess sin to be naught, and against God, and desire God to forgive us our sin, should still continue and walk in sin, after that God most mercifully hath forgiven us the same.

Also, we may easily withstand temptation and sin, if we believe truly, and pray earnestly. For we have learned in the doctrine of faith, that we cannot be righteous, pure, and holy, of ourselves; but the Holy Ghost doth purify, cleanse, and hallow us. And if we believe this steadfastly, then we ought to pray with a fervent spirit, and say thus: "Lord, our heavenly Father, we beseech thee suffer us not to be led into temptation." And if we thus pray, then

God will hear us, and will give us strength against him that tempts us, and against his temptation: for a christian man's life is a continual war upon earth; and, so long as we live in this world, we may not look to have peace or quietness; but as in the sea one wave comes after another, so in this world one temptation follows another. So that, when we have overcome one temptation, by-and-by another is at hand, peradventure greater than the first. Wherefore in this sixth petition we do not pray thus, O heavenly Father, grant that we may have no temptations; but we say thus, O heavenly Father, suffer us not to be led into temptation. To be led into temptation is, when God suffers the greatness of temptation so to grow, that we are not able to overcome the same, but are so deceived and blinded by the devil, that sin is pleasant unto us, and we see nothing in the same but pleasure and profit, and consider not the anger of God due for sin, nor the poison that lies hid in the same, nor the pain that shall follow thereof: and so we persuade ourselves, that we have no more need to watch or fight against sin, but consent to temptation, and yield ourselves into the hands of our enemies. This Christ calls to be led into temptation, as in our common speech we are wont to say, This led me, or This brought me, into this mischief. And that we be not led into temptation, it is our part earnestly to pray to God, as Christ hath taught and commanded us.

So you perceive, good children, the misery of this transitory and mortal life, that it is full of temptations and snares. But we must not give place to them, but withstand them, and live godly: but this we are not able to do except the Holy Ghost sanctify us, and make us pure and holy. Wherefore we ought to pray to God that he will give us the Holy Ghost, and that he will vouchsafe to assist and strengthen us, that we may withstand all temptations, and keep his holy commandments.

And this is the meaning and plain understanding of this sixth petition. Wherefore, good children, I pray you diligently learn the same, that when you are asked, How understand you the sixth petition? you may answer, God tempteth no man. But here we pray, that God will keep and defend us, that the devil, the world, and the flesh, deceive us not, and lead us not into ungodliness, idolatry, blasphemy, desperation, or other horrible sins. And although we are tempted with these sins, yet we desire God,

that at length we may overcome them, and triumph over them, by the help and assistance of the Holy Ghost.

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL. AMEN.

Ye have heard, in the sixth petition, how we sue to God, that he would rule, govern, and strengthen us, by his Holy Ghost, that we may be able to fight against sin, to withstand all the perilous temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil, and to overcome them, so that we may become righteous and holy. Now follows the seventh and last petition, in the which we desire God to deliver us from this perilous and continual battle, and from all other evils, that this great danger may not continue for ever, but that at length we may have some end thereof. And for this Christ taught us to pray, and to say, Good Lord, deliver us from evil.

And now, to the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall know, good children, that this word, "evil," signifies, in this place, not only sin against God's commandments, and unbelief against God's promise; but also betokens all kind of adversity and affliction which we suffer for our sins, either in our bodies, souls, honours, or riches; as ignorance, blindness of mind, sadness, sorrow, trouble of conscience, faintness of the heart, sickness of the body, poverty, slanders, despising, reproaches, persecutions, battle, sedition, hunger, pestilence, and all plagues, with which Satan afflicts and troubles us, either by himself, or by the wicked world, whereof he is prince and governor. Which evils no man can number or rehearse, for they are without number, and increase daily more and more; for the devil, in this latter time, daily more and more rages against the true church and people of God, as he perceives that his kingdom draws to an end, and a short time remains, until the day of judgment come and his everlasting damnation.

Furthermore, the world waxes daily worse and worse, and men wax more wild and unruly. Sin, wickedness, malice, and craftiness, increase above all measure; so much, that it is not possible to number the great floods of evils, which have almost overflowed the world. Among the which evils there is such blindness and corruption of judgment, that few there are, who can rightly discern what is good and what is evil. As, for example, many men,

when they are sick, judge bodily sickness to be a great evil; whereas, indeed, if they would take it as they ought to do, it is to them an occasion of great goodness; who perchance, if they should have continual health, would forget God, and run headlong into dangerous perils both of body and soul, from which evils their bodily diseases do stay and hinder them; and so their bodily sickness works in them their soul's health and salvation.

Also, many men set all their mind upon riches and wealth of this world, which makes them proud and high-minded, full of revenging, idle and slothful, pitiless to the poor, and stubborn both toward God and their neighbour, to put their trust in themselves, and to follow bodily pleasures in rioting, surfeiting, and banqueting; whereof ensue divers diseases and sicknesses; whereas, if they had been poor men, they would have laboured for their living, and would have lived much more temperately, healthfully, quietly, and godly.

And many there are, who take adversity very impatiently, and murmur against God, when their worldly devices come not to pass after their minds; and many times, they know not what danger they should have come unto, if God had not hindered their purpose. So that we know full little what is for us or against us, what is good or ill, but as we are taught by the word of God. And therefore we do not desire God to deliver us from this or that particular or special evil, but we are taught to pray to God with these short words and sighings of the spirit, that God would vouchsafe to help us, not as we shall think good, for we do not well know what is good nor what is ill for us, but as it shall please him, and as he shall judge profitable for us, not prescribing or appointing unto him either time, place, or manner of helping or delivering of us.

For as St. Paul saith, We know not what to pray for as we ought to do, but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with sighings which cannot be declared. Nevertheless, let not this saying of St. Paul discourage us from praying. For God is not so ignorant, that he needs that we should express our particular requests unto him. For he knows what we want, before we open our mouths to pray to him. Wherefore Christ in the gospel teaches us this lesson, When ye pray, babble not much, as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much babbling; but be not ye like unto them; for

your heavenly Father knoweth what you lack, before you ask of him.

Now forasmuch as the evils of this miserable life are so many that we can neither number them, know them, nor rightly judge of them, as I have heretofore declared, therefore our master Christ, who forbiddeth us to use many words in our prayers, hath, as it were, knit up together in one fardel* all the plagues and adversities that happen unto us in this world, and hath taught us to say this short prayer; "Good Lord, deliver us from evil." As though he should say thus, Be not discouraged from praying, although you perfectly know not all the kinds of evils, from which you desire to be delivered, but only say these few words, Deliver us from evil, and by-and-by your heavenly Father knoweth from what thing he ought to deliver you, and will gladly do it.

Now, good children, you see how good and merciful is God, our heavenly Father, who so much loves us, and has so fatherly a care for us, that he sees what we need, and what evils he should deliver us from, before we begin to ask. And he requires not that we should use many words, but only that from the deepness of our hearts we should call upon him, and do to him this honour, that is to say, to ask all things of him, to take him for our only God, and to trust assuredly that he will hear us. Therefore, good children, learn perfectly this lesson, that God willeth and requireth of us, that we in all necessity and danger that may chance unto us, should call on him for help, and to put our trust and confidence in him alone, and in no man or creature, besides him. For the prophet Jeremiah saith, Cursed be he which doth put his trust in man, and maketh him his defence. And although men do oftentimes help and succour us, yet it is not men that do it, but it is God that worketh these things by men, as by his instruments, whom he hath chosen for that purpose. But when God will not help us, then is there no man that is able to deliver us. If we have any wrong done unto us, then if it please God to succour us, he doth it by his judges and common officers, whom he hath ordained for that purpose. But if he be not minded to deliver us, then all the men in the world cannot help us.

Likewise, when we are sick, if God's pleasure be not to make us whole, what can all physicians and medicines

* Bundle or packet.

avail us? But if he be willing to make us whole again, he worketh this by physicians and medicines, which he hath ordained for the same use. Our duty therefore is, in all our needs to call upon God, to ask help of him, to confess that all goodness comes from him, and to make him only the author and chief giver of all the good things that we have, and to thank him for the same.

Nevertheless, we must also give due honour to God's instruments and means, by which he worketh his benefits in us. Furthermore, good children, mark diligently this lesson also, that we are not taught to say in this petition, Keep us from evil, but Deliver us from evil. And in desiring God to deliver us from evil, we do confess, as the truth is indeed, that as long as we live in this miserable world we are wrapped in and subject to all kinds of evils, and that we are not able to deliver ourselves therefrom.

And the well and head out of which all these evils do spring, is original sin, in which we were conceived; whereby man's reason is so blinded, that of himself he cannot know God or his word. And man's will also by this sin is so poisoned, that he doth not obey the will of God nor keep his commandments. Now because man's reason is blinded, it is easy for the devil to lead man to all errors, as idolatry, heresies, witchcrafts, enchantments, and to all kinds of superstitious and false doctrine. And these offences God punishes with divers and grievous plagues, as with pride, envy, contention, detraction, slandering, lying, railing, trouble, and unquietness of conscience, fear and pensiveness of the mind, and such like; which vices so torment and gnaw our hearts, that they daily waste and consume us. And hereof ensue divers diseases, sicknesses, and infirmities, and at length death itself.

Also when man's will is not ruled by God's law, but follows his own affections and lusts, then he runs headlong into all kinds of gross and horrible sin, as to treason, sedition, adulteries, theft, extortion, bribery, beguiling and deceiving his neighbour, to pride, envy, anger, gluttony, brawling, fighting, and manslaughter. And because God of his justice cannot suffer such heinous sins to be unpunished, therefore he suffers the devil sometimes to infect the air, sometimes to stir up great and dangerous tempests and storms; sometimes he permits him to destroy our houses, cattle, and riches, with fire or water. Again, God suffers him sometimes to have such power over us for our sins, that

some he makes to run mad, some he causes to destroy themselves. For Satan's chief study is to drive men to such fear, trouble, and anguish of mind, that through pensiveness and heaviness of heart he may bring them to desperation. And his only intent and study is, to bring as many as he can to everlasting damnation.

Now you have heard, good children, into how great and horrible evils we are brought by original sin, so that every moment we are in danger to be drowned with the raging floods thereof. Wherefore, surely we have most need continually to cry to our heavenly Father, desiring him to deliver us from such great perils and evils. For we cannot offer unto God a more acceptable sacrifice, than by calling upon his holy name to acknowledge him for our God, and to give him this praise, that he it is who is both able and willing to deliver us from all our miseries.

Furthermore, good children, you shall yet learn here another lesson worthy to be noted and remembered, which is this; that in this request we desire not God utterly to destroy all those evils that vex and trouble us, and so to put them clean away, (which for a time we must suffer for our sins,) that they may remain no longer in this world; but we desire God to deliver us from the said evil, that is to say, that after we have suffered evil by some space of time in this life, and have been proved and tried by the fire of adversity, that then, when it shall seem good to our most merciful Father, he will deliver us from the said evils, that we perish not in them. For, seeing that we have brought ourselves into these miseries, we must patiently suffer them for a time, because they are punishments due for our sin, which we most worthily have deserved. And although our heavenly Father most mercifully forgives us our offences, yet he doth not take sin clean away, but during this life we fight against sin, until we die, and so are tried and proved whether we love him and his commandments, better than our own wills and pleasures. Also our merciful Father layeth on our backs divers afflictions and adversities to pull down our proud and high stomachs, and to mortify our flesh, that we may be like our brother Christ, who by the cross overcame sin, death, and the devil, and so entered into everlasting glory.

So that in this petition we must learn both wisdom and patience; wisdom to beware of sin when it provokes us, and in no wise to follow the same—patience to suffer

willingly the cross and such afflictions as God shall send unto us, and to pray God with fervent desire that he suffer us not to perish in the same, but mercifully to defend us, until such time as it shall please him clearly to deliver us, which shall be when we shall die, and by God's power be raised again from death to life, and be delivered from all evils. When we say in the Lord's Prayer, Deliver us from evil, we desire God to send us a good death, that then, above all other times, we may be delivered from all evils.

Forasmuch as at that hour we are in the greatest danger of all evils and temptations; wherefore it is most necessary for us, even from our tender age, to pray to our Lord, that at that last hour chiefly he will be good and gracious unto us, delivering us from all manner of evil. So that death may be to us no evil, but a clear acquittance from all evils. And this, the Lord's Prayer, we must ever end with this word, "Amen;" which is as much to say as, Surely I trust it shall be so. And it is not enough to say Amen with our tongue only, but also Amen must be in our heart, and continue and tarry there; that is to say, we ought to believe surely and constantly that our prayer is heard, and that our heavenly Father will grant us our petitions. For so Christ hath promised, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, shall be given to us. And for that intent Christ confirms this his promise with an oath, saying, Amen.

Now you have heard, good children, the true and plain exposition of the seventh and last petition, which I pray you to place in your memories, that when you are asked, How understand you the seventh petition? you may readily answer, Herein we generally desire our heavenly Father to deliver us from all evil and peril both of body, soul, land, cattle, and riches; and that when we shall lie on our death-bed, he will then grant us a good hour, that we may depart out of this vale of misery in his favour, and from this transitory life enter into life everlasting. The which God grant us all. Amen.*

* The part of this catechism given in the preceding pages, is nearly without abridgment; a few paragraphs, which are mostly repetitions or superfluous, have been omitted. The remainder is entitled, A sermon of baptism, of the authority of the keys, and of the Lord's supper. This catechism was evidently prepared with much care, and was printed in a superior manner, with wood engravings beautifully executed. There is a very perfect copy in the British Museum, with which the present edition has been compared.

EXTRACTS FROM

A DEFENCE OF THE TRUE AND CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

OF

THE SACRAMENT

OF THE

BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR SAVIOUR CHRIST;

WITH

A CONFUTATION OF SUNDRY ERRORS CONCERNING THE SAME, GROUNDED AND STABLISHED UPON GOD'S HOLY WORD, AND APPROVED BY THE CONSENT OF THE MOST ANCIENT DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH;

MADE BY THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

Primate of all England and Metropolitan.

"It is the spirit that giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing." John iv."

Some account of Cranmer's books on the Sacrament.

In 1550, Cranmer printed a defence of the true and catholic doctrine of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ. Strype says, The great reason which moved him to write this book was, that he might the more effectually purge the church of popery; esteeming transubstantiation and the mass to be the very roots of it. His work was translated into Latin, and was highly esteemed by many of the continental reformers. At this book the defenders of popery were so nettled, that in the same year, 1550, Winchester, then in the Tower, and fickle Dr. Smith, then at Louvain, printed answers. Gardiner's book made the greatest noise; it was printed in France. In the preface he falsely stated, that "he had been called before the king's commissioners for his catholic faith in the sacrament," whereas this indeed was not the cause of his troubles, nor did he state it in the early copies of his book, but added it afterwards to make his cause appear the more specious, as though it were the cause of the church.

To this book of Gardiner's, the archbishop studied and composed an answer; holding himself bound, for the vindication of the evangelical truth, as well as of his own writing, and for the satisfaction of the people, not to suffer it to be untaken notice of. When it was known that the archbishop was preparing an answer against Gardiner, the people were in very great expectation, and conceived an earnest desire to see and read it. His reply to Gardiner was in the most fair and candid method that could be devised; for he first set down his own treatise, piece by piece;

then Gardiner's reply thereunto, word for word, leaving not one paragraph without a full answer. His reply to Smith was only of some things most worthy to be taken notice of, the rest of Smith's book being mere trifles. The answer to Smith he inserted in the body of his answer to Gardiner, as occasion served; only at the end he made a particular reply to Smith's preface. It seemed to be a very complete exercitation upon the subject. The book was stored with such great learning and plenty of arguments, that no one controversy was by any ever handled against the papists more accurately. To this book Cranmer referred in St. Mary's church immediately before his burning, as containing his full opinions on the subject. The papists spake much against this work, being much galled by it.

Peter Martyr also printed a book upon the sacrament, which contained the sum of his lectures upon that point, in the university of Oxford. In the dedication he said that Cranmer had such great skill in this controversy, as one could hardly find in any one besides. That there was none of the fathers which he had not diligently noted; no ancient or modern book extant which he had not with his own eyes, seen noted by the archbishop's hand. Whatsoever belonged to the whole controversy, the archbishop had digested into particular chapters; and that with such great labour, that unless he had been an eye-witness of it and seen it, he could not easily have believed others if they had told him, in regard of the infinite toil, diligence, and exactness wherewith the archbishop had done it. He added that Cranmer had done the same as to the other doctrines which were then particularly under controversy. Cranmer's arguments probably were the means of bringing Martyr to the true doctrine.

Gardiner replied to Cranmer's second book, under the name of Marcus Antonius Constantius, in which he reduces the archbishop's work to two hundred and fifty-five objections, to each of which he replies, and to twelve rules which Cranmer had laid down for finding out the true sense of the fathers. When Gardiner compiled his book, he was a prisoner in the Tower, but under such easy restraint, that he was furnished with workmen and amanuenses; every man that had any arguments for the popish doctrine, however trivial, brought them to him, and he out of the heap made such selections as he thought good.

Gardiner, in his Marcus Antonius, quoted Cranmer's second work very unfairly, and the archbishop during his imprisonment was anxious to prepare an answer. He finished three parts, though he wrote under considerable difficulties, scarcely having paper and ink allowed him, and no books to make use of. His great desire to complete this work, was the chief cause of his appeal to the general council, and his wish to prolong his life. Two parts of the three which he completed, perished at Oxford, the other was preserved, but never was printed. The Romanists, having boasted after Cranmer's death, that no one could answer this book of Marcus Antonius, Peter Martyr was prevailed upon to write a reply, which was printed at Zurich. See Strype's Memorials of Cranmer, b. ii. ch. 25.

The above is a summary account of the controversy arising from Cranmer's defence of the Sacrament, extracts from which are given in the following pages. His second work is a valuable performance, but the subject has been so fully treated in the present collection, that it is unnecessary to attempt even extracts. The book itself is a small folio volume.

A PREFACE TO THE READER.

Our Saviour Christ Jesus, according to the will of his eternal Father, when the time thereto was fully accomplished, taking our nature upon him, came into this world from the high throne of his Father, to declare unto miserable sinners good news, to heal them that were sick, to make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak; to set prisoners at liberty, to show that the time of grace and mercy was come, to give light to them that were in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to preach and give pardon and full remission of sin to all his elected. And to perform the same, he made a sacrifice and oblation of his own body upon the cross, which was a full redemption, satisfaction, and propitiation for the sins of the whole world. And to commend this, his sacrifice, unto all his faithful people, and to confirm their faith and hope of eternal salvation in the same, he has ordained a perpetual memory of his said sacrifice, daily to be used in the church to his perpetual laud and praise, and to our singular comfort and consolation; that is to say, the celebration of his holy supper, wherein he doth not cease to give himself, with all his benefits, to all those that duly receive the same supper, according to his blessed ordinance.

But the Romish antichrist, to deface this great benefit of Christ, has taught, that his sacrifice upon the cross is not sufficient hereunto, without another sacrifice, devised by him and made by the priest, or else without indulgences, beads, pardons, pilgrimages, and such other pelfray,* to supply Christ's imperfection. And, that christian people cannot apply to themselves the benefits of Christ's passion; but that the same is in the distribution of the bishop of Rome; or else that by Christ we have no full remission, but are delivered only from sin; and there yet remains temporal pain in purgatory, due for the same, to be remitted after this life by the Romish antichrist and his ministers, who take upon them to do for us that which Christ either would not or could not do.

Oh heinous blasphemy and most detestable injury against Christ! Oh wicked abomination in the temple of God! Oh pride intolerable of antichrist, and most manifest token

* Rubbish.

of the son of perdition, extolling himself above God, and with Lucifer exalting his seat and power above the throne of God! For he that takes upon him to supply that which he pretends to be imperfect in Christ, must needs make himself above Christ, and so very antichrist. For what is this else, but to be against Christ, and to bring him into contempt, as one, that either for lack of charity would not, or for lack of power could not, with all his blood-shedding and death, clearly deliver his faithful, and give them full remission of their sins; but that the full perfection thereof must be had at the hands of antichrist of Rome and his ministers. What man of knowledge and zeal to God's honour, can with dry eyes see this injury to Christ, and look upon the state of religion, brought in by the papists, perceiving the true sense of God's word subverted by false glosses of man's devising, the true christian religion turned into certain hypocritical and superstitious sects, the people praying with their mouths and hearing with their ears they wist not what, and so ignorant in God's word, that they could not discern hypocrisy and superstition from true and sincere religion.

This was of late years the face of religion within this realm of England, and yet remains in divers realms. But thanks be to almighty God and to the king's majesty, with his father,* a prince of most famous memory, the superstitious sects of monks and friars, that were in this realm, are wholly taken away; the scripture is restored unto the proper and true understanding, the people may daily read and hear God's heavenly word, and pray in their own language, which they understand. So that their hearts and mouths may go together, and be none of those people of whom Christ complained, saying, These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Thanks be to God, many corrupt weeds are plucked up which were wont to rot the flock of Christ, and to hinder the growing of the Lord's harvest.

But what avails it to take away beads, pardons, pilgrimages, and such other like popery, so long as two chief roots remain unpulled up, whereof so long as they remain, will spring again all former impediments of the Lord's harvest and corruption of his flock? The rest is but branches and leaves, the cutting away whereof is but like topping and lopping of a tree, or cutting down of weeds,

* Edward VI. and Henry VIII.

leaving the body standing, and the roots in the ground; but the very body of the tree, or rather the root of the weeds, is the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, of the real presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the altar, as they call it, and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ, made by the priest, for the salvation of the quick and the dead. Which roots, if they be suffered to grow in the Lord's vineyard, they will overspread all the ground again with the old errors and superstitions.

These injuries to Christ are so intolerable, that no christian heart can willingly bear them. Wherefore, seeing that many have set to their hands and whetted their tools, to pluck up the weeds, and to cut down the tree of error, I, not knowing otherwise how to excuse myself at the last day, have in this book set to my hand and axe, with the rest; to cut down this tree, and to pluck up the weeds and plants by the roots, which our heavenly Father never planted; but which were grafted and sown in his vineyard by his adversary, the devil, and antichrist his minister. The Lord grant that this my travail and labour in his vineyard, be not in vain, but that it may prosper and bring forth good fruits to his honour and glory. For when I see his vineyard overgrown with thorns, brambles, and weeds, I know that everlasting woe appertains unto me, if I hold my peace, and put not to my hands and tongue, to labour in cleansing his vineyard. I take God to witness, who seeth the hearts of all men thoroughly, that I take this labour for no other consideration, but for the glory of his name, and the discharge of my duty, and the zeal that I bear towards the flock of Christ.

I know in what office God hath placed me, and to what purpose; that is to say, to set forth his word truly unto his people, to the uttermost of my power, without respect of person or regard of thing in the world, but of Him alone. I know what account I shall make to him hereof at the last day, when every man shall answer for his vocation, and receive for the same good or ill, according as he hath done. I know how antichrist hath obscured the glory of God, and the true knowledge of his word, overcasting the same with mists and clouds of error and ignorance, through false glosses and interpretations. It pities me to see the simple and hungry flock of Christ led into corrupt pastures, carried blindfold, they know not whither, and fed with poison in the stead of wholesome meats.

And, moved by the duty, office, and place, whereunto it hath pleased God to call me, I give warning in his name, unto all that profess Christ, that they flee far from Babylon, if they will save their souls, and beware of that great harlot, that is to say, the pestiferous see of Rome, that she make you not drunk with her pleasant wine. Trust not her sweet promises, and banquet not with her; for instead of wine she will give thee sour dregs, and for meat she will feed you with rank poison. But come to our Redeemer and Saviour Christ, who refreshes all that truly come unto him, be their anguish and heaviness ever so great. Give credit unto him in whose mouth was never found guile nor untruth. By him you shall be clearly delivered from all your diseases; of him you shall have full remission from punishment and blame. He it is that feeds continually all that belong unto him, with his own flesh that hanged upon the cross, and gives them drink of the blood flowing out of his own side, and makes to spring within them water that flows unto everlasting life. Listen not to the false incantations, sweet whisperings, and crafty jugglings of the subtle papists, wherewith they have this many years deluded and bewitched the world; but hearken to Christ, give ear unto his words, which shall lead you the right way unto everlasting life, there with him to live ever as heirs of his kingdom. Amen.

THE FIRST BOOK.

The first book treats "Of the true and catholic doctrine and use of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ."

I. The supper of the Lord, otherwise called the holy communion or sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, hath been of many men, and by sundry ways very much abused, but especially within these four or five hundred years.

Of some it has been used as a sacrifice propitiatory for sin, and otherwise superstitiously, far from the intent that Christ first ordained the same at the beginning, doing therein great wrong and injury to his death and passion. And of some others it has been very lightly esteemed, or

rather contemned and despised, as a thing of small or none effect. And thus between both the parties has been much variance and contention, in divers places of christendom.

Therefore to the intent that this holy sacrament, or Lord's Supper, may hereafter neither of the one party be contemned or lightly esteemed, nor of the other party be abused to any other purpose than Christ himself first appointed and ordained, and that so the contention of both parties may be quieted and ended; the most sure and plain way is, to cleave unto holy scripture, wherein whatsoever is found must be taken for a most sure ground and an infallible truth; and whatsoever cannot be grounded upon the same, touching our faith, is man's device, changeable and uncertain. And therefore here are set forth the very words that Christ himself and his apostle St. Paul spoke, both of the eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood, and also of the eating and drinking of the sacrament of the same.

After reciting various passages in the gospels and epistles relative to the institution and use of the Lord's Supper, Cranmer proceeds to state as follows:—*

IV. By these words of Christ rehearsed of the evangelists, and by the doctrine of St. Paul, which he confesses he received of Christ, two things specially are to be noted.

First, that our Saviour Christ called the material bread which he brake, his body; and the wine which was the fruit of the vine, his blood. And yet he spake not this to the intent, that men should think that material bread is his very body, or that his very body is material bread: neither that wine made of grapes is his very blood, or that his very blood is wine made of grapes: but to signify unto us, as St. Paul saith, that the cup is a communion of Christ's blood, that was shed for us, and the bread is a communion of his flesh, that was crucified for us. So that although in the truth of his human nature, Christ be in heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father: yet whosoever eateth of that bread in the supper of the Lord, according to Christ's institution and ordinance, is assured by Christ's own promise and testament, that he is a member of his body, and receives the benefits of his passion, which he suffered for us upon the cross.

* John vi. Matt. xxvi. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. 1 Cor. x. xi.

And likewise, he that drinketh of that holy cup in that supper of the Lord, according to Christ's institution, is certified by Christ's legacy and testament, that he is made partaker of the blood of Christ, which was shed for us. And this St. Paul meant, when he saith, Is not the cup of blessing, which we bless, a communion of the blood of Christ? Is not the bread, which we break, a communion of the body of Christ? So that no man can contemn or lightly esteem this holy communion, except he contemn also Christ's body and blood, and care not whether he have any fellowship with him, or not. And of those men St. Paul saith, They eat and drink their own damnation, because they esteem not the body of Christ.

V. The second thing which may be learned of the foresaid words of Christ and St. Paul, is this, That although none eat the body of Christ, and drink his blood, but they have eternal life, as appears by the words before recited of St. John; yet both the good and the bad do eat and drink the bread and wine, which are the sacraments of the same. But besides the sacraments, the good eat everlasting life, the evil everlasting death. Therefore St. Paul saith, Whosoever shall eat of this bread, and drink of the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Here St. Paul saith not, that he who eateth the bread and drinketh the cup of the Lord unworthily, eateth and drinketh the body and blood of the Lord; but, he is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But what he eateth and drinketh St. Paul declares, saying, He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation.

Thus is declared the sum of all that scripture speaks of the eating and drinking, both of the body and blood of Christ, and also of the sacrament of the same.

VI. And as these things most certainly are true, because they are spoken by Christ himself, the author of all truth, and by his holy apostle St. Paul, as he received them of Christ; so, all doctrines contrary to the same most certainly are false and untrue, and of all christian men to be eschewed, because they are contrary to God's word. And all doctrine concerning this matter, that is more than this, which is not grounded upon God's word, is of no necessity, neither ought the people's heads to be busied, or their consciences troubled with the same. So that things spoken

and done by Christ, and written by the holy evangelists and St. Paul, ought to suffice the faith of christian people, as touching the doctrine of the Lord's supper, and holy communion, or sacrament of his body and blood.

Which being well considered and weighed, shall be a just occasion to pacify and agree both parties; as well those who hitherto have contemned or lightly esteemed it, as also those who have hitherto, for lack of knowledge or otherwise, ungodly abused it.

VII. Christ ordained the sacrament to move and stir all men to friendship, love, and concord, and to put away all hatred, variance, and discord, and to testify a brotherly and unfeigned love between all them that are the members of Christ; but the devil, the enemy of Christ and of all his members, hath so craftily juggled herein, that of nothing rises so much contention as of this holy sacrament.

God grant, that, all contention set aside, both parties may come to this holy communion with such a lively faith in Christ, and such an unfeigned love to all Christ's members, that, as they carnally eat with their mouths this sacramental bread, and drink the wine, so spiritually they may eat and drink the very flesh and blood of Christ, which is in heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of his Father; and that finally, by his means, they may enjoy with him the glory and kingdom of heaven. Amen.

VIII. Although in this treatise of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, I have already sufficiently declared the institution and meaning of the same, according to the very words of the gospel and of St. Paul; yet it shall not be in vain somewhat more at large to declare the same, according to the mind, as well of holy scripture, as of old ancient authors; and that so sincerely and plainly, without doubts, ambiguities, or vain questions, the very simple and unlearned people may easily understand the same, and be edified thereby.

And this by God's grace is mine only intent and desire, that the flock of Christ, dispersed in this realm, among whom I am appointed a special pastor, may no longer lack the commodity and fruit which springs of this heavenly knowledge. For the more clearly it is understood, the more sweetness, fruit, comfort, and edification it brings to the godly receivers thereof. And to the clear understanding of this sacrament, divers things must be considered.

IX. First, that as all men of themselves are sinners, and through sin are in God's wrath, banished far away from him, condemned to hell and everlasting damnation, and none is clearly innocent, but Christ alone; so every soul inspired by God, is desirous to be delivered from sin and hell, and to obtain at God's hands, mercy, favour, righteousness, and everlasting salvation.

And this earnest and great desire is called in scripture, the hunger and thirst of the soul: with which kind of hunger David was taken, when he said, As an hart longeth for springs of water, so doth my soul long for thee, O God. My soul hath thirsted after God, who is the well of life. My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh wisheth for thee.

And this hunger the poor sinful soul is driven unto by means of the law, which shows unto her the horribleness of sin, the terror of God's indignation, and the horror of death and everlasting damnation.

And when she sees nothing but damnation for her offences, by justice and accusation of the law, and this damnation is ever before her eyes; then, in this great distress, the soul, being pressed with heaviness and sorrow, seeks for some comfort, and desires some remedy for her miserable and sorrowful estate. And this feeling of her damnable condition, and greedy desire of refreshment is the spiritual hunger of the soul.

And whosoever hath this godly hunger is blessed of God, and shall have meat and drink enough, as Christ himself said: Blessed be they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled full. And on the other side, they that see not their own sinful and damnable estate, but think themselves holy enough, and in good case and condition enough, as they have no spiritual hunger, so shall they not be fed of God with any spiritual food. For as almighty God feeds them that are hungry; so does he send away empty, all that are not hungry.

But this hunger and thirst is not easily perceived of the carnal man. For, when he heareth the Holy Ghost speak of meat and drink, his mind is in the kitchen and buttery, and he thinks upon his dishes and pots, his mouth and his belly.

But the scripture in sundry places uses special words, whereby to draw our gross minds from the fancying of our teeth and belly, and from this carnal and fleshly

imagination. For the apostles and disciples of Christ, when they were yet carnal, knew not what was meant by this kind of hunger and meat; and therefore, when they desired him to eat, to withdraw their minds from carnal meat, he said unto them, I have other meat to eat, which you know not. And why knew they it not? Forsooth, because their minds were gross as yet, and had not received the fulness of the Spirit. And therefore our Saviour Christ, minding to draw them from this grossness, told them of another kind of meat than they fancied, rebuking them for that they perceived not there was any other kind of eating and drinking, besides that eating and drinking, which is with the mouth and the throat.

Likewise, when he said to the woman of Samaria, Whosoever shall drink of that water, that I shall give him, shall never be thirsty again. They that heard him speak these words, might well perceive that he went about to make them well acquainted with another kind of drinking than is the drinking with the mouth and throat. For there is no such kind of drink, that with once drinking can quench the thirst of a man's body for ever. Wherefore in saying, He shall never be thirsty again, he drew their minds from drinking with the mouth, unto another kind of drinking, whereof they knew not, and unto another kind of thirsting, wherewith as yet they were not acquainted.

Also, when our Saviour Christ said, He that cometh to me shall not hunger: and he that believeth on me shall never be thirsty; he gave them a plain watch-word, that there was another kind of meat and drink than that wherewith he fed them at the other side of the water; and another kind of hungering and thirsting than was the hungering and thirsting of the body. By these words, therefore, he drove the people to understand another kind of eating and drinking, of hungering and thirsting, than that which belongs only to the preservation of temporal life.

Now then, as that which comforts the body is called meat and drink, in like manner the scripture calls that which comforts the soul, meat and drink.

X. Wherefore, as here before, in the first note, is declared the hunger and drought of the soul; so is it now secondly to be noted, what is the meat, drink, and food of the soul.

The meat, drink, food, and refreshing of the soul, is our Saviour Christ, as he said himself, Come unto me, all ye that travail and are laden, and I will refresh you. And, If any man be dry, saith he, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth in me, floods of water of life shall flow out of his belly. And, I am the bread of life, saith Christ; he that cometh to me, shall not be hungry: and he that believeth in me, shall never be dry.

For as meat and drink comfort the hungry body, so the death of Christ's body, and the shedding of his blood, comforts the soul, when she is after her manner hungry. What is it that comforts and nourishes the body? Forsooth, meat and drink. By what names then shall we call the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, which comforts and nourishes the hungry soul, but by the names of meat and drink? And this similitude caused our Saviour to say, My flesh is very meat, and my blood is very drink. For there is no kind of meat that is comfortable to the soul, but only the death of Christ's blessed body; nor any kind of drink that can quench her thirst, but only the blood-shedding of our Saviour Christ, which was shed for her offences.—

XI. The third thing to be noted is this, That although our Saviour Christ likens his flesh and blood to meat and drink, yet he far passes and excels all corporeal meats and drinks. For although corporeal meats and drinks do nourish and continue our life here in this world, yet they begin not our life. But our Saviour Christ is both the first beginner of our spiritual life, and also afterwards he is our lively food and nourishment.

Moreover, meat and drink feed and nourish only our bodies, but Christ is the true and perfect nourishment, both of body and soul. And besides that, bodily food preserves the life but for a time; but Christ is such a spiritual and perfect food, that he preserves both soul and body for ever. As he said unto Martha, I am the resurrection and life. He that believeth in me, although he die, yet shall he live. And he that liveth and believeth in me, shall not die for ever.

XII. Fourthly, it is to be noted, that the true knowledge of these things, is the true knowledge of Christ, and to teach these things is to teach Christ; and the believing and feeling of these things, is the believing and feeling of

Christ in our hearts. And the more clearly we see, understand, and believe these things, the more clearly we see and understand Christ, and have more fully our faith and comfort in him.—

XIII. Fifthly, it is to be noted, that although there are many kinds of meats and drinks, which feed the body, yet our Saviour Christ, as many ancient authors write, ordained this sacrament of our spiritual feeding in bread and wine, rather than in other meats and drinks, because bread and wine do most lively represent unto us the spiritual union and knot of all faithful people, as well unto Christ, as also among themselves. For like as bread is made of a great number of grains of corn, ground, baked, and so joined together that thereof is made one loaf; and an infinite number of grapes are pressed together in one vessel, and thereof is made wine; likewise is the whole multitude of true christian people spiritually joined together, first to Christ, and then among themselves in one faith, one baptism, one Holy Spirit, one knot and bond of love.

XIV. Sixthly, It is to be noted, that as the bread and wine, which we do eat, are turned into our flesh and blood, and are made our very flesh and very blood, and are so joined and mixed with our flesh and blood, that they are made one whole body together; even so are all faithful christians, spiritually turned into the body of Christ, and so joined into Christ, and also together among themselves, that they make but one mystical body of Christ, as St. Paul saith: We are one bread and one body, as many as are partakers of one bread and one cup. And as one loaf is given among many men, so that every one is partaker of the same loaf; and likewise, one cup of wine is distributed unto many persons, whereof every one is partaker; even so our Saviour Christ, whose flesh and blood are represented by the mystical bread and wine in the Lord's supper, gives himself unto all his true members, spiritually to feed them, nourish them, and give them continual life by him. And as the branches of a tree, or members of a body, if they be dead or cut off, neither live, nor receive any nourishment or sustenance of the body or tree; so likewise ungodly and wicked people, who are cut off from Christ's mystical body, or are dead members of the same, do not spiritually feed upon Christ's body and blood, nor have any life, strength, or sustentation thereby.

XV. Seventhly, it is to be noted, that whereas nothing in this life is more acceptable before God, or more pleasant unto man, than for christian people to live together quietly in love, and peace, unity, and concord; this sacrament most aptly and effectually moves us thereunto. For, when we all are made partakers of this one table, what ought we to think, but that we all are members of one spiritual body, whereof Christ is the head? That we are joined together in one Christ, as a great number of grains of corn are joined together in one loaf? Surely, they have very hard and stony hearts, who are not moved with these things. And more cruel and unreasonable are they than brute beasts, who cannot be persuaded to be good to their christian brethren and neighbours, for whom Christ suffered death, when in this sacrament they are put in remembrance that the Son of God bestowed his life for his enemies.

For we see by daily experience, that eating and drinking together makes friends, and continueth friendship. Much more then ought the table of Christ to move us so to do. Wild beasts and birds are made gentle by giving them meat and drink; why then should not christian men wax meek and gentle with this heavenly meat of Christ? Hereunto we are stirred and moved, as well by the bread and wine in this holy supper, as by the words of holy scripture recited in the same. Wherefore, whose heart soever this holy sacrament, communion, and supper of Christ will not kindle with love unto his neighbours, and cause him to put out of his heart all envy, hatred, and malice, and engrave in the same all amity, friendship, and concord, he deceives himself, if he thinks that he hath the Spirit of Christ dwelling within him.—

XVI. The eighth thing that is to be noted is, that this spiritual meat of Christ's body and blood is not received in the mouth, digested in the stomach, as corporeal meats and drinks commonly are; but it is received with a pure heart, and a sincere faith. And the true eating and drinking of the said body and blood of Christ, is with a constant and a lively faith to believe, that Christ gave his body, and shed his blood upon the cross for us; and that he so joins and incorporates himself to us, that he is our head, and we his members, and flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, having him dwelling in us, and we in him. And herein stands the whole effect and strength of

this sacrament. And this faith God worketh inwardly in our hearts by his Holy Spirit, and confirms the same outwardly to our ears by hearing of his word; and to our other senses, by eating and drinking of the sacramental bread and wine in his holy supper.

What then can be more comfortable to us, than to eat this meat and drink this drink? whereby Christ certifies us, that we are spiritually and truly fed and nourished by him, and that we dwell in him, and he in us. Can this be showed unto us more plainly than when he saith himself; He that eateth me, shall live by me?

Wherefore, whosoever does not contemn the everlasting life, how can he but highly esteem this sacrament? How can he but embrace it, as a sure pledge of his salvation? And when he sees godly people devoutly receive the same, how can he but be desirous oftentimes to receive it with them? surely no man, that well understands and diligently weighs these things, can be without a great desire to come to this holy supper.

All men desire to have God's favour, and when they know the contrary, that they are in his indignation, and cast out of his favour, what can comfort them? How their minds are vexed! What trouble is in their consciences! All God's creatures seem to be against them, and to make them afraid, as being ministers of God's wrath and indignation towards them. And rest and comfort they can find none, neither within them, nor without them. And in this case they do hate as well God, as the devil: God, as an unmerciful and extreme judge; and the devil, as a most malicious and cruel tormentor.

And in this sorrowful heaviness holy scripture teaches them, that our heavenly Father can by no means be pleased with them again, but by the sacrifice and death of his only begotten Son; whereby God hath made perpetual amity and peace with us, pardons the sins of them that believe in him, makes them his children, and gives them to his first-begotten Son Christ, to be incorporated into him, to be saved by him, and to be made heirs of heaven with him. And in the receiving of the holy supper of our Lord, we are put in remembrance of this his death, and of the whole mystery of our redemption. In the which supper is made mention of his testament, and of the aforesaid communion of us with Christ, and of the remission of our sins by his sacrifice upon the cross.

Wherefore in this sacrament, if it be rightly received with a true faith, we are assured that our sins are forgiven, and the league of peace and the testament of God is confirmed between him and us; so that whosoever by a true faith doth eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood, hath everlasting life by him. Which, when we feel in our hearts at the receiving of the Lord's supper, what can be more joyful, more pleasant, or more comfortable unto us?

All this to be true, is most certain by the words of Christ himself, when he first instituted his holy supper, the night before his death, as it appears as well by the words of the evangelists, as of St. Paul. Do this, saith Christ, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. And St. Paul saith, As often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you shall show the Lord's death until he come. And again Christ said: This cup is a new testament, in mine own blood, which shall be shed for the remission of sins.

This doctrine, here recited, may suffice for all that are humble and godly, and seek nothing that is superfluous, but what is necessary and profitable. And therefore unto such persons may be made here an end of this book. But unto those that are contentious papists and idolaters, nothing is enough. And yet, because they shall not glory in their subtle inventions and deceivable doctrine, as though no man were able to answer them, I shall desire the readers, of patience to suffer me a little while, to spend some time in vain, to confute their most vain vanities. And yet the time shall not be altogether spent in vain, for thereby shall more clearly appear the light from the darkness, the truth from false sophistical subtleties, and the certain word of God, from men's dreams and fantastical inventions.

XVII. But these things cannot manifestly appear to the reader, except the principal points be first set out, wherein the papists vary from the truth of God's word: which are chiefly four.

First, the papists say, that in the supper of the Lord, after the words of consecration, as they call it, there is none other substance remaining, but the substance of Christ's flesh and blood, so that there remains neither bread to be eaten, nor wine to be drunken. And although there be the colour of bread and wine, the savour, the smell, the bigness, the fashion, and all other, as they call them,

accidents, or qualities, and quantities of bread and wine; yet, say they, there is no very bread nor wine, but they are turned into the flesh and blood of Christ. And this conversion they call transubstantiation, that is to say, turning of one substance into another substance. And although all the accidents, both of the bread and wine, remain still; yet, say they, the same accidents are in no manner of thing, but hang alone in the air, without anything to stay them upon. For in the body and blood of Christ, say they, these accidents cannot be, nor yet in the air, for the body and blood of Christ and the air, are neither of that bigness, fashion, smell, nor colour, that the bread and wine be. Or in the bread and wine, say they, these accidents cannot be, for the substance of bread and wine, as they affirm, are clean gone. And so there remains whiteness, but nothing is white; there remain colours, but nothing is coloured therewith; there remains roundness, but nothing is round; and there is bigness, and yet nothing is big; there is sweetness, without anything sweet; softness, without anything soft; breaking, without anything broken; division, without anything divided; and so other qualities and quantities, without anything to receive them. And this doctrine they teach, as a necessary article of our faith.

But it is not the doctrine of Christ, but the subtle invention of antichrist, first decreed by Innocent III.* and afterwards more at large set forth by school authors, whose study was ever to defend and set abroad to the world all such matters, as the bishop of Rome had once decreed. And the devil, by his minister antichrist, had so dazzled the eyes of the great multitude of christian people in these latter days, that they sought not for their faith, at the clear light of God's word, but at the Romish antichrist; believing whatsoever he prescribed unto them, yea, though it were against all reason, all sense, and God's most holy word also. For else he could not have been very antichrist in deed, except he had been so repugnant unto Christ, whose doctrine is clean contrary to this doctrine of antichrist. For Christ teacheth, that we receive very bread and wine in the most blessed supper of the Lord, as sacraments to admonish us, that as we are fed with bread and wine bodily, so we are fed with the body and blood of our Saviour Christ spiritually. As in our baptism we

* A. D. 1215.

receive very water, to signify unto us, that as water is an element to wash the body outwardly, so are our souls washed by the Holy Ghost inwardly.

The second principal thing, wherein the papists vary from the truth of God's word, is this: they say, that the very natural flesh and blood of Christ, which suffered for us upon the cross, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father of heaven, is also really, substantially, corporeally, and naturally, in or under the accidents of the sacramental bread and wine, which they call the forms of bread and wine.

And yet here they vary not a little among themselves. For some say, that the very natural body of Christ is there, but not naturally or sensibly. And others say, that it is there naturally and sensibly, and of the same bigness and fashion that it is in heaven, and as the same was born of the blessed virgin Mary; and that it is there broken and torn in pieces with our teeth. And this appears partly by the school authors, and partly by the confession of Berengarius, which Nicholas II. constrained him to make, which was this: That of the sacraments of the Lord's table the said Berengarius should promise to hold that faith, which the said pope Nicholas and his council held, which was, that not only the sacraments of bread and wine, but also the very flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, are sensibly handled of the priest in the altar, broken and torn with the teeth of the faithful people.*

But the true catholic faith, grounded upon God's most infallible word, teaches us, that our Saviour Christ, as concerning his man's nature and bodily presence, is gone up into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father, and there shall he tarry until the world's end; at which time he shall come again, to judge both the quick and the dead, as he saith himself in many scriptures. I forsake the world, and go to my Father. And in another place he saith: You shall have ever poor men among you, but me you shall not ever have. And again he saith: Many hereafter shall come and say, Look, here is Christ, or look, there he is; but believe them not. And St. Peter saith in the Acts, that heaven must receive Christ, until the time that all things shall be restored. And St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, agreeth hereto, saying; Seek

* In the eleventh century. See History of the Church of Christ.

for things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of the Father. And St. Paul, speaking of the very sacrament, saith: As often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, show forth the Lord's death until he come.—Till he come, saith St. Paul, signifying, that he is not there corporeally present. For what speech were this, or who useth of him, that is already present, to say, Until he come? For, Until he come, signifies that he is not yet present. This is the catholic faith, which we learn from our youth in our common creed, which Christ taught, the apostles followed, and the martyrs confirmed with their blood.

And although Christ in his human nature substantially, really, corporeally, naturally, and sensibly, be present with his Father in heaven; yet sacramentally and spiritually he is here present in the water, bread, and wine, as in signs and sacraments; but he is indeed spiritually in the faithful christian people, who according to Christ's ordinance are baptized, or receive the holy communion, or unfeignedly believe in him. Thus have you heard the second principal article, wherein the papists vary from the truth of God's word, and from the catholic faith.

Now the third thing, wherein they vary, is this.

The papists say, that evil and ungodly men receive in this sacrament the very body and blood of Christ, and eat and drink the self-same thing that the good and godly men do. But the truth of God's word is contrary; that all those, who are godly members of Christ, as they corporeally eat the bread and drink the wine; so spiritually they eat and drink Christ's very flesh and blood. And as for the wicked members of the devil, they eat the sacramental bread, and drink the sacramental wine, but they do not spiritually eat Christ's flesh, nor drink his blood, but they eat and drink their own damnation.

The fourth thing, wherein the popish priests dissent from the manifest word of God, is this. They say, that they offer Christ every day for remission of sins, and distribute by their masses the merits of Christ's passion. But the prophets, apostles, and evangelists do say, that Christ himself in his own person made a sacrifice for our sins upon the cross, by whose wounds all our diseases were healed, and our sins pardoned; and so did never any priest, man, or creature but he; and he did the same never more than once. And the benefit hereof is in no

man's power to give unto any other, but every man must receive it at Christ's hands himself, by his own faith and belief, as the prophet saith. Habak. ii.

The second book is, "Against the error of Transubstantiation." Cranmer therein confutes the errors of the papists, and defends the catholic truth, "both by God's most certain word, and also by the most old approved authors and martyrs of Christ's church."

THE THIRD BOOK

Teaching the manner how Christ is present in his Supper.

I. Now this matter of transubstantiation being, as I trust, sufficiently resolved, which is the first part before rehearsed, wherein the papistical doctrine varieth from the catholic truth; order requires next, to treat of the second part, which is of the manner of the presence of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ in the sacrament thereof, wherein is no less contention than in the first part.

It is not unknown to all true faithful christian people, that our Saviour Christ, being perfect God, and in all things equal and coeternal with his Father, for our sakes became also a perfect man, taking flesh and blood of his blessed mother the virgin Mary, and, saving sin, being in all things like unto us, adjoining unto his divinity a most perfect soul and a most perfect body: his soul being endued with life, sense, will, reason, wisdom, memory, and all other things required to the perfect soul of man, and his body being made of the very flesh and bones; not only having all members of a perfect man's body in due order and proportion, but also being subject to hunger, thirst, labour, sweat, weariness, cold, heat, and all other like infirmities and passions of man, and unto death also, and that the most vile and painful upon the cross. And after his death he rose again with the self-same visible and palpable body, and appeared therewith, and showed the same unto his apostles, and especially to Thomas, making him to put his hands into his side, and to feel his wounds. And

with the self-same body he forsook this world, and ascended into heaven, the apostles seeing and beholding his body, when it ascended, and now sitteth at the right hand of his Father, and there shall remain until the last day, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

This is the true catholic faith, which the scripture teaches, and the universal church of Christ hath ever believed, from the beginning until within these four or five hundred years last passed, when the bishop of Rome, with the assistance of his papists, hath set up a new faith and belief of their own devising, that the same body, really, corporeally, naturally, and sensibly, is in this world still, and that in a hundred thousand places at one time, being enclosed in every pix* and bread consecrated.

II. Although we do affirm, according to God's word, that Christ is in all persons that truly believe in him, so that with his flesh and blood he spiritually nourishes them, and feeds them, and gives them everlasting life, and assures them thereof, as well by the promise of his word, as by the sacramental bread and wine in his holy supper, which he instituted for the same purpose, yet we do not a little vary from the heinous errors of the papists.

For THEY teach, that Christ is the bread and wine—but WE say, according to the truth, that he is in them that worthily eat and drink the bread and wine.

THEY say, that when any man eateth the bread and drinketh the cup, Christ goeth into his mouth or stomach with the bread and wine, and no further—but WE say, that Christ is in the whole man, both in the body and soul, of him that worthily eateth the bread and drinketh the cup, and not in his mouth or stomach only.

THEY say, that Christ is received in the mouth, and enters in with the bread and wine—WE say that he is received in the heart, and enters in by faith.

THEY say, that Christ is really in the sacramental bread, being reserved a whole year, or so long as the form of bread remains; but after the receiving thereof, he flies up, say they, from the receiver unto heaven, as soon as the bread is chewed in the mouth, or changed in the stomach—but WE say, that Christ remains in the man that worthily receives it, so long as the man remains a member of Christ.

* The box in which the wafer of the Romish sacrament is kept.

THEY say, that in the sacrament the corporeal members of Christ are not distant in place, one from another; but that wheresoever the head is, there are the feet, and wheresoever the arms are, there are the legs; so that in every part of the bread and wine is altogether whole head, whole feet, whole flesh, whole blood, whole heart, whole lungs, whole breast, whole back, and altogether whole, confused, and mixed without distinction or diversity. Oh what a foolish and an abominable invention is this, to make of the most pure and perfect body of Christ, such a confused and monstrous body! And yet can the papists imagine nothing so foolish, but all christian people must receive the same, as an oracle of God, and as a most certain article of their faith, without whispering to the contrary.

Furthermore, THEY say, that a dog or a cat eat the body of Christ, if they by chance do eat the sacramental bread—WE say, that no earthly creature can eat the body of Christ, nor drink his blood, but only man.

THEY say, that every man, good and evil, eats the body of Christ—WE say, that both eat the sacramental bread and drink the wine, but none eat the very body of Christ, and drink his blood, but only they that are lively members of his body.

THEY say, that good men eat the body of Christ, and drink his blood, only at that time, when they receive the sacrament—WE say, that they eat and drink, and feed of Christ continually, so long as they are members of his body.

THEY say, that the body of Christ, that is in the sacrament, hath its own proper form and quantity—WE say, that Christ is there sacramentally and spiritually, without form and quantity.

THEY say, that the fathers and prophets of the old testament did not eat the body nor drink the blood of Christ—WE say, that they did eat his body and drink his blood, although he was not yet born nor incarnated.

THEY say, that the body of Christ is every day, many times made, as often as there are masses said; and that then, and there, he is made of bread and wine—WE say, that Christ's body was never but once made, and then not of the nature and substance of bread and wine, but of the substance of his blessed mother.

THEY say, that the mass is a sacrifice satisfactory for

sin by the devotion of the priest that offereth, and not by the thing that is offered—but WE say, that their saying is a most heinous lie and detestable error against the glory of Christ. For the satisfaction for our sins is not the devotion nor offering of the priest; but that the only host* and satisfaction for all the sins of the world, is the death of Christ, and the oblation of his body upon the cross; that is to say, the oblation that Christ himself offered once upon the cross, and never but once, nor ever any one but he. And therefore that oblation which the priests make daily in their papistical masses, cannot be a satisfaction for other men's sins by the priest's devotion, but it is a mere illusion and subtle craft of the devil, whereby antichrist hath many years blinded and deceived the world.

THEY say, that Christ is corporeally in many places at one time, affirming that his body is corporeally and really present in as many places as there are hosts consecrated—WE say that as the sun corporeally is ever in heaven, and no where else, and yet, by his operation and virtue, the sun is here in earth, by whose influence and virtue all things in the world are corporeally generated, increase, and grow to their perfect state; so likewise our Saviour Christ bodily and corporeally is in heaven, sitting at the right hand of his Father, although spiritually he hath promised to be present with us upon earth unto the world's end. And, whensoever two or three are gathered together in his name, he is there in the midst among them, by whose supernal grace† all godly men are first by him spiritually regenerated, and afterwards increase and grow to their spiritual perfection in God; spiritually by faith eating his flesh and drinking his blood, although the same corporeally be in heaven, far distant from our sight.

III. Now to return to the principal matter; lest it might be thought a new device of us, that Christ, as concerning his body and his human nature, is in heaven, and not in earth, by God's grace it shall be evidently proved that this is no new devised matter; but that it was ever the old faith of the catholic church, until the papists invented a new faith, that Christ, really, corporeally, naturally, and sensibly, is here still with us in earth, shut up in a box, or within the compass of bread and wine!

* Victim, sacrifice.
† Grace that comes from above.

This needs no better nor stronger proof, than that which the old authors bring for the same; that is to say, the general profession of all christian people in the common creed, wherein, as concerning Christ's humanity,* they are taught to believe after this sort, that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, that he descended into hell, and rose again the third day, that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of his almighty Father, and from thence shall come to judge the quick and dead.

This hath been ever the catholic faith of christian people, that Christ, as concerning his body and his manhood, is in heaven, and shall there continue until he come down at the last judgment.

And forasmuch as the creed makes such express mention of the article of his ascension and departing hence from us, if it had been another article of our faith, that his body tarries also here with us in earth, surely in this place of the creed was so urgent an occasion given to make some mention thereof, that doubtless it would not have been passed over in our creed with silence. For if Christ, as concerning his humanity, be both here and gone hence, and both those two be articles of our faith; when mention was made of the one in the creed, it was necessary to make mention of the other, lest, by professing the one, we should be dissuaded from believing the other, being so contrary the one to the other.

Cranmer then adds a number of proofs from "scripture and the old ancient doctors of Christ's church," which show the extent of his reading, and the ability with which he applied himself to this controversy, which then was of such vital importance. At the present day it is unnecessary to follow him through these authorities; they are however worthy the attention of all whose minds may be perplexed with the Romish sophistries upon this subject. Cranmer thus sums up these testimonies:—

XIII. Now forasmuch as it is plainly declared and manifestly proved, that Christ called bread his body, and wine his blood; and that these sentences are figurative speeches, and that Christ, as concerning his human nature and bodily presence, is ascended into heaven with his

* Human nature.

whole flesh and blood, and is not here upon earth; and that the substance of bread and wine do remain still, and are received in the sacrament; and that although they remain, yet they have changed their names, so that the bread is called Christ's body, and the wine his blood; and that the cause, why their names are changed, is this, that we should lift up our hearts and minds from the things which we see, unto the things which we believe and which are above in heaven, whereof the bread and wine have the names, although they are not the very same things indeed: these things well considered and weighed, all the authorities and arguments, which the papists feign to serve for their purpose, are wholly wiped away.

Cranmer then examines the passages in the ancient fathers, which the papists were accustomed to quote in support of their doctrines; these he considers, and refutes their erroneous interpretations. Here again is a full and satisfactory exposure of the sophistries of the church of Rome.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

The fourth book treats, "Of the eating and drinking of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ." Cranmer commences by saying, that "the gross error of the papists is of the carnal eating and drinking of Christ's flesh and blood, with our mouths." A few extracts may be made from this part of the treatise.

II. Every good and faithful christian man feeleth in himself, how he feedeth of Christ, eateth his flesh, and drinketh his blood. For he putteth the whole hope and trust of his redemption and salvation in that only sacrifice which Christ made upon the cross; having his body there broken, and his blood there shed, for the remission of his sins. And this great benefit of Christ the faithful man earnestly considereth in his mind, cheweth and digesteth it with the stomach of his heart, spiritually receiving Christ wholly into him, and giving again himself wholly unto Christ. And this is the eating of Christ's flesh, and drinking of his blood, the feeling whereof is to every man the feeling how he eateth and drinketh Christ, which no evil man, or member of the devil can do.

III. For as Christ is a spiritual meat, so is he spiritually eaten and digested with the spiritual part of us, and gives us spiritual and eternal life, and is not eaten, swallowed, and digested with our teeth, tongues, throats, and bellies.

Therefore, saith Cyprian, he that drinks of the holy cup, remembering this benefit of God, is more thirsty than he was before; and lifting up his heart unto the living God, is taken with such a singular hunger and appetite, that he abhors all gall-like and bitter drinks of sin; and all savour of carnal pleasure is to him, as it were, sharp and sour vinegar. And the sinner, being converted, receiving the holy mysteries of the Lord's supper, gives thanks unto God, and bows down his head, knowing that his sins are forgiven, and that he is made clean and perfect, and his soul, which God hath sanctified, he rendereth to God again as a faithful pledge, and then he glories with Paul, and rejoices, saying, Now it is not I that live, but it is Christ that lives within me. These things are practised and used among faithful people: and to pure minds, the eating of his flesh is no horror, but honour, and the spirit delights in the drinking of the holy and sanctifying blood. And doing this, we whet not our teeth to bite, but with pure faith we break the holy bread. These are the words of Cyprian.

And according unto the same, Augustine saith, Prepare not thy jaws, but thy heart. And in another place he saith, Why dost thou prepare thy belly and thy teeth? Believe, and thou hast eaten. But of this matter is sufficiently spoken before, where it is proved, that to eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood, are figurative speeches.

Cranmer quotes numerous authorities from the fathers to show "that only the lively members of Christ do eat his flesh and drink his blood," and concludes this book as follows:—

IX. Now it is requisite to speak something of the manner and form of worshipping of Christ by those that receive this sacrament, lest that, in the stead of Christ himself, the sacrament be worshipped. For as his humanity, joined to his divinity, and exalted to the right hand of his Father, is to be worshipped of all creatures, in heaven, earth, and under the earth; even so, if in the stead thereof, we worship the signs and sacraments, we commit as great idolatry as ever was or shall be to the world's end.

And yet have the very antichrists, the subtlest enemies that Christ hath, by their fine inventions and crafty scholastical divinity, deluded many simple souls, and brought them to this horrible idolatry, to worship things visible, and made with their own hands, persuading them that creatures were their Creator, their God, and their Maker.

For else what made the people run from their seats to the altar, and from altar to altar, and from sakering, as they call it, to sakering;* peeping, tooting, and gazing, at that thing which the priest held up in his hands, if they thought not to honour that thing which they saw? What moved the priests to lift up the sacraments so high over their heads? or the people to cry to the priests, Hold up, hold up; and one man to say to another, Stoop down before; or to say, This day I have seen my Maker; and, I cannot be quiet, except I see my Maker once a day? What was the cause of all these; and that as well the priests as the people so devoutly did knock and kneel at every sight of the sacrament, but that they worshipped that visible thing, which they saw with their eyes, and took it for very God? For if they worshipped in spirit only Christ, sitting in heaven with his Father, what needed they to remove out of their seats to toot and gaze, as the apostles did after Christ, when he was gone up into heaven? If they worshipped nothing that they saw, why did they rise up to see? Doubtless many of the simple people worshipped that which they saw with their eyes.

And although the subtle papists do colour and cloke the matter ever so finely, saying, they worship not the sacraments, which they see with their eyes, but that which they believe with their faith to be really and corporeally in the sacraments, yet why do they then run from place to place, to gaze at the things which they see, if they worship them not? giving thereby occasion to them that are ignorant, to worship that which they see. Why do they not rather quietly sit still in their seats, and move the people to do the like, worshipping God in heart and in spirit, than to gad about from place to place, to see that thing, which they confess themselves is not to be worshipped?

And yet to eschew one inconvenience, that is to say, the worshipping of the sacrament, they fall into another as evil, and worship nothing there at all. For they worship that, as they say, which is really and corporeally, and yet

* Consecrating the bread and wine.

invisibly present under the kinds of bread and wine, which, as before is expressed and proved, is utterly nothing. And so they give unto the ignorant occasion to worship bread and wine, and they themselves worship nothing there at all.

But the papists, for their own advantage to keep the people still in idolatry, often allege a certain place of Augustine upon the psalms, where he saith, "that no man doth eat the flesh of Christ, except he first worship it, and that we do not offend in worshipping thereof, but we should offend, if we should not worship it." Serm. in Psal. 98.

That is true, which Augustine saith in this place. For who is he, that professes Christ, and is spiritually fed and nourished with his flesh and blood, but he will honour and worship him, sitting at the right hand of his Father, and render unto him from the bottom of his heart, all laud, praise, and thanks, for his merciful redemption?

And as this is most true, which Augustine saith, so is that most false which the papists would persuade upon Augustine's words, that the sacramental bread and wine, or any visible thing, is to be worshipped in the sacrament. For Augustine's mind was so far from any such thought that he forbids utterly to worship Christ's own flesh and blood alone, but in consideration, and as they are annexed and joined to his divinity. How much less then could he think or allow that we should worship the sacramental bread and wine, or any outward, or visible sacrament, which are shadows, figures, and representations of Christ's very flesh and blood.

And Augustine was afraid, lest in worshipping Christ's very body, we should offend, and therefore he bids us, when we worship Christ, that we should not tarry and fix our minds upon his flesh, which of itself availeth nothing; but that we should lift up our minds from the flesh to the spirit, which giveth life; and yet the papists are not afraid by crafty means to induce us to worship those things which are signs and sacraments of Christ's body.

But what will not the shameless papists allege for their purpose, when they are not ashamed to maintain the adoration of the sacrament, by these words of Augustine? wherein he speaks not one word of the adoration of the sacrament, but only of Christ himself.

And although he said that Christ gave his flesh to be

eaten of us, yet he meant not that his flesh is here corporeally present, and corporeally eaten, but only spiritually. As his words declare plainly, which follow in the same place, where Augustine, as it were in the person of Christ, speaks these words, It is the spirit that giveth life, but the flesh profiteth nothing. The words, which I have spoken unto you are spirit and life. That which I have spoken, understand you spiritually. You shall not eat this body, which you see, and drink that blood, which they shall shed that shall crucify me. I have commended unto you a sacrament, understand it spiritually, and it shall give you life. And although it must be visibly ministered, yet it must be invisibly understood.

These words of Augustine, with the others before recited, do express his mind plainly, that Christ is not otherwise to be eaten than spiritually, which spiritual eating requires no corporal presence, and that he intended not to teach here any adoration, either of the visible sacraments, or of any thing that is corporeally in them. For indeed there is nothing really and corporeally in the bread to be worshipped, although the papists say, that Christ is in every consecrated bread.

But our Saviour Christ himself hath given us warning beforehand, that such false christians and false teachers should come, and has bid us beware of them, saying, If any man tell you, that Christ is here, or Christ is there, believe him not. For there shall rise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show many signs and wonders, so that, if it were possible, the very elect should be brought into error. Take heed; I have told you beforehand.

Thus our Saviour Christ, like a most loving Pastor and Saviour of our souls, has given us warning beforehand, of the perils and dangers that were to come, and to be wise and wary, that we should not give credit unto such teachers as would persuade us to worship a piece of bread, to kneel to it, to knock to it, to creep to it, to follow it in procession, to lift up our hands to it, to offer to it, to light candles to it, to shut it up in a chest or box, to do all other honour unto it, more than we do unto God: having alway this pretence or excuse for our idolatry, "Behold, here is Christ." But our Saviour Christ calleth them false prophets, and saith, Take heed, I tell you before, believe them not; if they say to you, Behold Christ is abroad, or

in the wilderness, go not out. And if they say, he is kept in close places, believe them not.

X. If you will ask me the question, who are those false prophets and seducers of the people, the answer is soon made: the Romish antichrists and their adherents, the authors of all error, ignorance, blindness, superstition, hypocrisy, and idolatry.

For Innocent the Third, one of the most wicked men that was ever in the see of Rome, ordained and decreed, that the host should be diligently kept under lock and key.

And Honorius the Third not only confirmed the same, but commanded also, that the priests should diligently teach the people from time to time, that when they lifted up the bread called the host, the people should then reverently bow down, and that likewise they should do when the priest carrieth the host unto sick folks. These are the statutes and ordinances of Rome, under pretence of holiness, to lead the people unto all error and idolatry: not bringing them by bread unto Christ, but from Christ unto bread.

XI. But all that love and believe Christ himself, let them not think, that Christ is corporeally in the bread, but let them lift up their hearts unto heaven, and worship him sitting there at the right hand of his Father. Let them worship him in themselves, whose temples they are, in whom he dwelleth and liveth spiritually; but in no wise let them worship him as being corporeally in the bread. For he is not in it; neither spiritually, as he is in man, nor corporeally, as he is in heaven; but only sacramentally, as a thing may be said to be in the figure whereby it is signified.

Thus is sufficiently reproved the third principal error of the papists, concerning the Lord's supper, which is, that wicked members of the devil do eat Christ's very body, and drink his blood.

The Fifth Book is, "Of the Oblation and Sacrifice of our Saviour Christ." Cranmer's statements on this most important subject, are here given without abridgement.

THE FIFTH BOOK.

OF THE OBLATION AND SACRIFICE OF OUR SAVIOUR CHRIST.

I. The greatest blasphemy and injury that can be against Christ, and yet universally used through the popish kingdom, is this, that the priests make their mass a sacrifice propitiatory, to remit the sins as well of themselves, as of others, both quick and dead, to whom they list to apply the same. Thus, under pretence of holiness, the papistical priests have taken upon them to be Christ's successors, and to make such an oblation and sacrifice as never creature made, but Christ alone, neither made he the same any more times than once, and that was by his death upon the cross.

II. For as St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews witnesses; although the high priests of the old law offered many times, at the least once every year, yet Christ offereth not himself many times, for then he should many times have died. But now, he offereth himself but once, to take away sin by that offering of himself. And as men must die once, so was Christ offered once, to take away the sins of many.

And furthermore St. Paul saith, that the sacrifices of the old law, although they were continually offered from year to year, yet could they not take away sin, nor make men perfect. For if they could once have quieted men's consciences by taking away sin, they should have ceased and no more have been offered. But Christ with once offering, hath made perfect for ever them that be sanctified, putting their sins clean out of God's remembrance. And where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin.

And yet further he saith, concerning the old testament, that it was disannulled and taken away, because of the feebleness and unprofitableness thereof, for it brought nothing to perfection. And the priests of that law were many, because they lived not long, and so the priesthood went from one to another; but Christ liveth ever, and hath an everlasting priesthood, that passes not from him to any man else. Wherefore he is able perfectly to save them that come to God by him, forasmuch as he liveth ever to make intercession for us. For it was meet for us

to have such an High Priest, that is holy, innocent, without spot, separated from sinners, and exalted up above heaven: who needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice, as Aaron's priests did, first for his own sins, and then for the people; for that he did once, when he offered up himself. Here, in his epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul has plainly and fully described unto us, the difference between the priesthood and sacrifices of the old testament, and the most high and worthy priesthood of Christ, his most perfect and necessary sacrifice, and the benefit that comes to us thereby.

For Christ offered not the blood of calves, sheep, and goats, as the priests of the old law used to do; but he offered his own blood upon the cross. And he went not into a holy place made by man's hands, as Aaron did; but he ascended up into heaven, where his eternal Father dwelleth, and before him he maketh continual supplication for the sins of the whole world, presenting his own body, which was torn for us, and his precious blood, which of his most gracious and liberal charity he shed for us upon the cross.

And that sacrifice was of such force, that there was no need to renew it every year, as the bishops (priests) did of the old testament, whose sacrifices were many times offered, and yet were of no great effect or profit, because they were sinners themselves that offered them, and offered not their own blood, but the blood of brute beasts; but Christ's sacrifice, once offered, was sufficient for evermore.

III. And that all men may the better understand this sacrifice of Christ, which he made for the great benefit of all men, it is necessary to know the distinction and diversity of sacrifices.

One kind of sacrifice there is, which is called a propitiatory or merciful sacrifice, that is to say, such a sacrifice as pacifies God's wrath and indignation, and obtains mercy and forgiveness for all our sins, and is the ransom for our redemption from everlasting damnation.

And although in the old testament there were certain sacrifices called by that name, yet in very deed there is but one such sacrifice, whereby our sins are pardoned, and God's mercy and favour obtained, which is the death of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, nor ever was any other sacrifice propitiatory at any time, nor ever shall be.

This is the honour and glory of this our High Priest, wherein he admits neither partner nor successor. For by his one oblation he satisfied his Father for all men's sins, and reconciled mankind unto his grace and favour. And whosoever deprive him of this honour, and go about to take it to themselves, they are very antichrists, and most arrogant blasphemers against God, and against his Son Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Another kind of sacrifice there is, which does not reconcile us to God, but is made of them that are reconciled by Christ, to testify our duties unto God, and to show ourselves thankful unto him. And therefore they are called sacrifices of laud, praise, and thanksgiving.

The first kind of sacrifice Christ offered to God for us, the second kind we ourselves offer to God by Christ.

And by the first kind of sacrifice Christ also offered us unto his Father; and by the second we offer ourselves and all that we have unto him and his Father.

And this sacrifice generally is our whole obedience unto God, in keeping his laws and commandments. Of which manner of sacrifice the prophet David speaks, saying, A sacrifice to God is a contrite heart. And St. Peter saith of all christian people, that they are a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. And St. Paul saith, that always we offer unto God a sacrifice of laud and praise by Jesus Christ.

IV. But now to speak somewhat more largely of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, he was such a high bishop, that he, once offering himself, was sufficient, by one effusion of his blood, to abolish sin unto the world's end. He was so perfect a Priest, that by one oblation he purged an infinite heap of sins, leaving an easy and a ready remedy for all sinners, that his one sacrifice should suffice for many years, unto all men that would not show themselves unworthy. And he took unto himself not only their sins, that many years before were dead, and put their trust in him; but also the sins of those who until his coming again should truly believe in his gospel. So that now we may look for none other priest or sacrifice, to take away our sins, but only Him and his sacrifice. And as He, dying once, was offered for all; so, as much as pertained to him, he took all men's sins unto himself. So that now

there remain no more sacrifices for sin, but extreme judgment at the last day, when He shall appear to us again, not as a man to be punished again, and to be made a sacrifice for our sins, as he was before; but he shall come in his glory, without sin, to the great joy and comfort of those who are purified and made clean by his death, and continue in godly and innocent living; and to the great terror and dread of those who are wicked and ungodly.

Thus the scripture teaches that if Christ had made any oblation for sin more than once, he should have died more than once; forasmuch as there is none oblation and sacrifice for sin, but only his death. And now there is no more oblation for sin, seeing that by Him our sins are remitted, and our consciences quieted.

V. And although in the old testament there were certain sacrifices, called sacrifices for sin, yet they were no such sacrifices that could take away our sins in the sight of God; but they were ceremonies, ordained to this intent, that they should be, as it were, shadows and figures, to signify beforehand the excellent sacrifice of Christ, who was to come, and should be the very true and perfect sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

And for this signification they had the name of a sacrifice propitiatory; and were called sacrifices for sins, not because they indeed took away our sins, but because they were images, shadows, and figures, whereby godly men were admonished of the true sacrifice of Christ, then to come, which should truly abolish sin and everlasting death.

And that those sacrifices, which were made by the priests in the old law, could not be able to purchase our pardon, and deserve the remission of our sins, St. Paul clearly affirms in his epistle to the Hebrews, where he saith, It is impossible that our sins should be taken away by the blood of oxen and goats.

Wherefore all godly men, although they used those sacrifices ordained of God, yet they did not take them as things of that value and estimation, that thereby they should be able to obtain remission of their sins before God.

But they took them partly for figures and tokens ordained of God, by which he declares that he would

send that Seed, which he promised to be the very true sacrifice for sin, and that he would receive those who trusted in that promise, and remit their sins for the sacrifice after to come.

And partly they used them as certain ceremonies, whereby such persons as had offended against the law of Moses, and were cast out of the congregation, were received again among the people, and declared to be absolved.

As for like purposes we use in the church of Christ, sacraments by him instituted. And this outward casting out from the people of God, and receiving in again, was according to the law and knowledge of man; but the true reconciliation and forgiveness of sins before God, neither the fathers of the old law had, nor we yet have, but only by the sacrifice of Christ, made in the mount of Calvary. And the sacrifices of the old law were prognostications and figures of the same then to come, as our sacraments are figures and demonstrations of the same now passed.

VI. Now, by these aforesaid things may every man easily perceive that the offering of the priest in the mass, or the appointing of his ministration at his pleasure to them that are quick or dead, cannot merit and deserve, either to himself, or to them for whom he singeth or sayeth, the remission of their sins; but that such popish doctrine is contrary to the doctrine of the gospel, and injurious to the sacrifice of Christ.

For, if only the death of Christ be the oblation, sacrifice, and price, wherefore our sins are pardoned, then the act or ministration of the priest cannot have the same office. Wherefore, it is an abominable blasphemy, to give that office or dignity to a priest, which pertains only to Christ; or to affirm that the church hath need of any such sacrifice; as who should say, that Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient for the remission of our sins; or else that his sacrifice should depend upon the sacrifice of a priest.

But all such priests as pretend to be Christ's successors in making a sacrifice of him, are his most heinous and horrible adversaries. For never any person made a sacrifice of Christ, but he himself only. And therefore St. Paul saith, that Christ's priesthood cannot pass from him to another. For what needs any more sacrifice, if Christ's sacrifice be perfect and sufficient? and as St. Paul saith,

that if the sacrifices and ministrations of Aaron, and other priests of that time, had lacked nothing, but had been perfect and sufficient, then should not the sacrifice of Christ have been required, for it had been in vain to add any thing to that, which of itself was perfect. So likewise, if Christ's sacrifice, which he made himself, be sufficient, what need we every day to have more and more sacrifices? Wherefore all popish priests, that presume to make every day a sacrifice of Christ, either must needs make Christ's sacrifice vain, imperfect, and insufficient; or else is their sacrifice in vain, which is added to the sacrifice which is already of itself sufficient and perfect.

But it is a wondrous thing to see what shifts and cavils the popish antichrists devise, to colour and cloke their wicked errors. And as a chain is so joined together that one link draws another after it; so vices and errors are knit together, that every one draws its fellow with it. And so does it here in this matter.

VII. For the papists, to excuse themselves, do say, that they make no new sacrifice, nor any other sacrifice than Christ made; for they are not so blind, but they see, that then they should add another sacrifice to Christ's sacrifice, and so make his sacrifice imperfect; but they say, that they make the self-same sacrifice for sin, that Christ himself made.

And here they run headlong into the foulest and most heinous error that ever was imagined. For if they make every day the same oblation and sacrifice for sin, that Christ himself made, and the oblation that he made was his death, and the effusion of his most precious blood upon the cross, for our redemption and price of our sins; then follows it of necessity, that they every day slay Christ and shed his blood; and so they be worse than the wicked Jews and pharisees, who slew him and shed his blood but once.

VIII. Almighty God, the Father of light and truth, banish all such darkness and error out of his church, with the authors and teachers thereof, or else convert their hearts unto him, and give this light of faith to every man, that he may trust to have remission of his sins, and be delivered from eternal death and hell, by the merit only of the death and blood of Christ; and that by his own faith every man may apply the same unto himself, and

not take it at the appointment of popish priests, by the merit of their sacrifices and oblations.

If we be indeed, as we profess, christian men, we may ascribe this honour and glory unto no man, but to Christ alone. Wherefore let us give the whole laud and praise hereof unto Him, let us fly only to him for succour, let us hold him fast, and hang upon him, and give ourselves wholly unto him. And forasmuch as he hath given himself to death for us, to be an oblation and sacrifice to his Father for our sins, let us give ourselves again unto him, making unto him an oblation, not of goats, sheep, kine, and other beasts, that have no reason, as was accustomed before Christ's coming; but of a creature that hath reason, that is to say, of ourselves, not killing our own bodies, but mortifying the brutal and unreasonable affection, that would gladly rule and reign in us.

So long as the law did reign, God suffered dumb beasts to be offered unto him, but now that we are spiritual, we must offer spiritual oblations in the place of calves, sheep, goats, and doves. We must kill devilish pride, furious anger, insatiable covetousness, filthy lucre, abominable lechery, deadly hatred and malice, foxy wiliness, wolfish ravening and devouring, and all unreasonable lusts and all other desires of the flesh. And as many as belong to Christ, must crucify and kill these, for Christ's sake, as Christ crucified himself for their sakes.

These are the sacrifices of christian men, these hosts and oblations are acceptable to Christ. And as Christ offered himself for us, so it is our duty after this manner to offer ourselves to him again. And so shall we not have the name of christian men in vain; but as we pretend to belong to Christ in word and profession, so shall we indeed be his in life and inward affection. So that within and without, we shall be altogether his, clear from all hypocrisy or dissimulation. And if we refuse to offer ourselves after this manner unto him, by crucifying our own wills, and committing ourselves wholly to the will of God, we are most unkind people, superstitious hypocrites, or rather unreasonable brutes, deserving to be excluded utterly from all the benefits of Christ's oblation.

IX. And if we put the oblation of the priest in the stead of the oblation of Christ, refusing to receive the sacrament of his body and blood ourselves, as he ordained, and

trusting to have remission of our sins by the sacrifice of the priest in the mass, and thereby also to obtain release of the pains in purgatory, we do not only injury to Christ, but also commit most detestable idolatry. For these are but false doctrines, without shame devised and feigned by wicked popish priests, idolaters, monks, and friars, who for lucre have altered and corrupted the most holy supper of the Lord, and have turned it into manifest idolatry. Wherefore all godly men ought with all their hearts to refuse and abhor all such blasphemy against the Son of God.

And forasmuch as in such masses is manifest wickedness and idolatry, wherein the priest alone makes satisfactory oblation, and applies the same for the quick and the dead, at his will and pleasure, all such popish masses are to be clearly taken away out of christian churches, and the true use of the Lord's Supper is to be restored again, wherein godly people assembled together, may receive the sacrament, every man for himself, to declare that he remembereth what benefit he hath received by the death of Christ, and to testify that he is a member of Christ's body, fed with his flesh, and drinking his blood spiritually.

X. Christ did not ordain his sacraments to this use, that one should receive them for another, or the priests for all the lay people; but he ordained them for this intent, that every man should receive them for himself, to ratify, confirm, and establish his own faith and everlasting salvation. Therefore as one man may not be baptized for another, and if he be, it availeth nothing, so ought not one to receive the holy communion for another. For if a man be dry or hungry, he is never a whit eased if another man drink or eat for him; or if a man be all befouled, it helpeth him nothing, another man to be washed for him. So avails it nothing to a man, if another man be baptized for him, or be refreshed for him with the meat and drink at the Lord's table. And therefore said St. Peter, Let every man be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And our Saviour Christ said to the multitude, Take and eat. And further he said, Drink you all of this. Whosoever therefore will be spiritually regenerated in Christ, he must be baptized himself. And he, that will live himself by Christ, must by himself eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood.

And briefly to conclude, he that thinketh to come to the

kingdom of Christ himself, must also come to his sacraments himself, and keep his commandments himself, and do all things that pertain to a christian man and to his vocation himself, lest if he refer these things to another man to do them for him, the other may with as good right claim the kingdom of heaven for him.

XI. Therefore Christ made no such difference between the priest and the layman, that the priest should make oblation and sacrifice of Christ for the layman, and eat the Lord's Supper from him all alone, and distribute and apply it as he pleases.* Christ has made no such difference; but the difference that is between the priest and the layman in this matter, is only in the ministration; that the priest, as a common minister of the church, doth minister and distribute the Lord's Supper unto others, and others receive it at his hands. But the very supper itself was by Christ instituted and given to the whole church, not to be offered and eaten of the priest for other men, but by him to be delivered to all that would duly ask it.

As in a prince's house the officers and ministers prepare the table, and yet others, as well as they, eat the meat and drink the drink; so do the priests and ministers prepare the Lord's Supper, read the gospel, and rehearse Christ's words, but all the people say thereto, Amen. All remember Christ's death, all give thanks to God, all repent and offer themselves an oblation to Christ, all take him for their Lord and Saviour, and spiritually feed upon him, and in token thereof they eat the bread and drink the wine in his mystical supper.

And this nothing diminishes the estimation and dignity of the priesthood and other ministers of the church, but advances and highly commends their ministration. For if they be much to be loved, honoured, and esteemed, who are the king's chancellors, judges, officers, and ministers in temporal matters; how much then are they to be esteemed, that are ministers of Christ's words and sacraments, and have committed to them the keys of heaven, to let in and shut out, by the ministration of his word and gospel.

* In the Romish daily private masses the priest consecrates the elements, and alone partakes of them, mentioning secretly in prayer the person, either living or dead, whom he wishes to be benefited by the ceremonial he has performed.

XII. Now forasmuch as I trust that I have plainly enough set forth the propitiatory sacrifice of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to the capacity and comfort of all men that have any understanding of Christ; and have declared also the heinous abomination and idolatry of the popish mass, wherein the priests have taken upon them the office of Christ, to make a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the people, and have also told what manner of sacrifice christian people ought to make, it is now necessary to make answer to the subtle persuasions and sophistical cavillations of the papists, whereby they have deceived many a simple man, both learned and unlearned.

The place of St. Paul unto the Hebrews, which they cite for their purpose, makes quite against them. For where St. Paul saith, that every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins, he spake not that of the priests of the new testament, but of the old, which, as he saith, offered calves and goats. And yet they were not such priests, that by their offerings and sacrifices they could take away the people's sins, but they were shadows and figures of Christ, our everlasting Priest, who only by one oblation of himself takes away the sins of the world. Wherefore the popish priests, that apply this text unto themselves, do directly contrary to the meaning of St. Paul, to the great injury and prejudice of Christ, by whom only, St. Paul saith, that the sacrifice and oblation for the sins of the whole world was accomplished and fulfilled.

And as little the text of the prophet Malachi serves for the papists' purpose, that every where should be offered unto God a pure sacrifice and oblation. For the prophet in that place spake no word of the mass, nor of the oblation propitiatory to be made by the priests; but he spake of the oblation of all faithful people, in what place soever they are, who offer unto God, with pure hearts and minds, sacrifices of laud and praise; prophesying of the vocation of the Gentiles, that God would extend his mercy unto them, and not be the God only of the Jews, but of all nations from east to west, that with pure faith call upon him and glorify his name.

XIII. But the adversaries of Christ gather together a great heap of authors, who, as they say, call the mass or holy communion, a sacrifice. But all those authors are

answered in this one sentence, that they call it not a sacrifice for sin, because it takes away our sin, which was taken away only by the death of Christ; but because it was ordained of Christ, to put us in remembrance of the sacrifice made by him upon the cross. And for that cause it bears the name of that sacrifice; as Augustine declareth plainly in his epistle to Boniface, before rehearsed in this book; and in his book, concerning Faith. before rehearsed also. And in his book, Of the City of God, he saith, "That which men call a sacrifice, is a sign or representation of the true sacrifice."

And the master of the sentence,* of whom all the school authors take their occasion to write, judged truly in this point, saying, "That, which is offered and consecrated of the priests, is called a sacrifice and oblation, because it is a memory and representation of the true sacrifice and holy oblation made in the altar of the cross."

And John Chrysostom, after he hath said, that Christ is our Bishop, who offered the sacrifice which made us clean, and that we offer the same now; lest any man may be deceived by his manner of speaking, he opens his meaning more plainly, saying, "That, which we do, is done for a remembrance of that which was done by Christ. For Christ saith, Do this in remembrance of me."

Also Chrysostom, declaring at length, that the priests of the old law offered ever new sacrifices, and changed them from time to time, and that christian people do not so, but offer ever one sacrifice of Christ: yet by-and-by, lest some men might be offended with this speech, he makes as it were a correction of his words, saying, "But rather we make a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice." As though he should say; Although in a certain kind of speech we may say, that every day we make a sacrifice of Christ; yet in very deed, to speak properly, we make no sacrifice of him, but only a commemoration and remembrance of that sacrifice, which he alone made, and never any but he. Nor Christ ever gave this honour to any creature, that he should make a sacrifice of him, nor ordained the sacrament of his holy supper, to the intent that either the people should sacrifice Christ again, or that the priest should make a sacrifice of him for the people. But his holy supper was ordained for this purpose, that every man, eating and drinking thereof, should remember that Christ died for

* Peter Lombard.

him, and so should exercise his faith, and comfort himself by the remembrance of Christ's benefits, and so give unto Christ most hearty thanks, and give himself also clearly unto him.

Wherefore the ordinance of Christ ought to be followed, the priest to minister the sacrament to the people, and they to use it to their consolation. And in this eating, drinking, and using of the Lord's Supper, we make not of Christ a new sacrifice propitiatory for remission of sin.

XIV. But the humble confession of all penitent hearts, their acknowledging of Christ's benefits, their thanksgiving for the same, their faith and consolation in Christ, their humble submission and obedience to God's will and commandments, is a sacrifice of laud and praise, accepted and allowed of God no less than the sacrifice of the priest. For Almighty God, without respect of persons, accepts the oblation and sacrifice of priest and lay person, of king and subject, of master and servant, of man and woman, of young and old, yea, of English, French, Scot, Greek, Latin, Jew, and Gentile; of every man, according to his faithful and obedient heart unto him, and that through the sacrifice propitiatory of Jesus Christ.

XV. And as for the saying or singing of mass by the priest, as it was in time past used, it is neither a sacrifice propitiatory, nor yet a sacrifice of laud and praise, nor in any wise allowed before God; but abominable and detestable, and thereof the saying of Christ may well be verified; That which seemeth an high thing before men, is abomination before God.

They, therefore, who gather of the doctors that the mass is a sacrifice for remission of sin, and that it is applied by the priest to them, for whom he sayeth or singeth; they who so gather of the doctors, do to them most grievous injury and wrong, most falsely belying them.

XVI. For these monstrous things were never seen or known of the old and primitive church, and there were not then in one church many masses every day, but upon certain days there was a common table of the Lord's Supper, where a number of people did together receive the body and blood of the Lord; but there were then no daily private masses where every priest received alone; like as unto this day there is none in the Greek churches, but one common mass in a day. Nor would the holy fathers of

the old church have suffered such ungodly and wicked abuses of the Lord's Supper.

But these private masses sprang up of late years, partly through the ignorance and superstition of unlearned monks and friars, who knew not what a sacrifice was, but made of the mass a sacrifice propitiatory, to remit both sin and the pain due for the same; but chiefly they sprang of lucre and gain, when priests found the means to sell masses to the people, which caused masses so much to increase, that every day was said an infinite number; and that no priest would receive the communion at another priest's hands, but every one would receive it alone. Neither regarding the godly decree of the most famous and holy council of Nice, which appointeth in what order priests should be placed above deacons at the communion; nor yet the canons of the apostles, which commanded that when any communion is ministered, all the priests together should receive the same, or else be excommunicated. So much the old fathers misliked that any priest should receive the sacrament alone.

Therefore when the old fathers called the mass or supper of the Lord a sacrifice, they meant, that it was a sacrifice of lauds and thanksgiving, and so as well the people as the priest do sacrifice, or else that it was a remembrance of the very true sacrifice propitiatory of Christ; but they meant in no wise, that it is a very true sacrifice for sin, and applicable by the priest to the quick and dead.

For the priest may well minister Christ's words and sacraments to all men, both good and bad; but he can apply the benefit of Christ's passion to no man, being of age and discretion, but only to such as by their own faith do apply the same unto themselves. So that every man of age and discretion, takes to himself the benefits of Christ's passion, or refuses them himself, by his own faith, quick or dead. That is to say, by his true and lively faith, which worketh by charity, he receives them, or else by his ungodliness or feigned faith he rejects them.

And this doctrine of the scripture clearly condemns the wicked inventions of the papists in these latter days, who have devised a purgatory to torment souls after this life, and oblations of masses said by the priests, to deliver them from the said torments, and a great number of other advantages do they promise to the simple ignorant people by their masses.

XVII. Now the nature of man being ever prone to idolatry from the beginning of the world; and the papists being ready by all means and policy to defend and extol the mass for their estimation and profit; and the people being superstitiously enamoured and doting upon the mass, because they take it for a present remedy against all manner of evils; and part of the princes being blinded by papistical doctrine, part loving quietness, and loth to offend their clergy and subjects; and all being captives and subjects to the antichrist of Rome; the state of the world remaining in this case, it is no wonder that abuses grew and increased in the church, that superstition with idolatry were taken for godliness and true religion, and that many things were brought in without the authority of Christ. As purgatory; the oblation and sacrificing of Christ by the priest alone; the application and appointing of the same to such persons as the priests would sing or say mass for; and to such abuses, as they could devise; to deliver some from purgatory, and some from hell, if they were not there finally by God determined to abide, as they termed the matter; to make rain or fair weather; to put away the plague and other sicknesses both from man and beast; to hallow and preserve them that went to Jerusalem, to Rome, to St. James in Compostella, and to other places in pilgrimage; for a preservative against tempest and thunder; against perils and dangers of the sea; for a remedy against murrain of cattle; against pensiveness of the heart, and against all manner of affliction and tribulation.

And finally, they extol their masses far above Christ's passion; promising many things thereby, which were never promised us by Christ's passion. As that if a man hear mass, he shall lack no bodily sustenance that day, nor any thing necessary for him, nor shall be hindered in his journey; he shall not lose his sight that day, nor die a sudden death; he shall not wax old in the time that he hears mass, nor shall any wicked spirits have power of him, be he ever so wicked a man, so long as he looks upon the sacrament. All these foolish and devilish superstitions, the papists of their own idle brain have devised of late years, which devices were never known in the old church.

XVIII. And yet they cry out against them that profess the gospel, and say, that they dissent from the church,

and would have them to follow the example of their church. And so would they gladly do, if the papists would follow the first church of the apostles, which was most pure and uncorrupt. But the papists have clearly varied from the usage and examples of that church, and have invented new devices of their own brains, and will in no wise consent to follow the primitive church; and yet they would have others follow their church, utterly varying and dissenting from the first most godly church.

But, thanks be to the eternal God, the manner of the holy communion, which is now set forth within this realm, is agreeable with the institution of Christ, with St. Paul and the old primitive and apostolic church, with the right faith of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross for our redemption, and with the true doctrine of our salvation, justification, and remission of all our sins by that only sacrifice.

Now remains nothing, but that all faithful subjects will gladly receive and embrace the same, being sorry for their former ignorance; and every man, repenting himself of his offences against God, and amending the same, may yield himself wholly to God, to serve and obey him all the days of his life; and often to come to the holy supper, which our Lord and Saviour Christ has prepared; and, as he there corporeally eats the very bread and drinks the very wine, so spiritually he may feed of the very flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, his Saviour and Redeemer; remembering his death, thanking him for his benefits, and looking for none other sacrifice at any priest's hands for remission of his sins; but only trusting to his sacrifice, who, being both the High Priest and also the Lamb of God, prepared from the beginning to take away the sins of the world, offered up himself once for ever, in a sacrifice of sweet smell unto his Father, and by the same paid the ransom for the sins of the whole world. Who is before us entered into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father, as Patron, Mediator, and Intercessor for us: and there has prepared places for all those that are lively members of his body, to reign with him for ever, in the glory of his Father; to whom with Him, and the Holy Ghost, be glory, honour, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

LETTERS AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

THE ARTICLE OF JUSTIFICATION.

From the Institution of a Christian Man.

A. D. 1537.

As touching the order and cause of our justification, we think it convenient, that all bishops and preachers shall instruct and teach the people committed unto their spiritual charge, that this word JUSTIFICATION signifies remission of our sins, and our acceptation or reconciliation into the grace and favour of God, that is to say, our perfect renovation in Christ.

Also, That sinners attain this justification by contrition and faith, joined with charity, after such sort and manner as is before mentioned and declared in the sacrament of penance.* Not as though our contrition or faith, or any works proceeding thereof, can worthily merit or deserve to attain the said justification; for the only mercy and grace of the Father, promised freely unto us for his Son's sake, Jesus Christ, and the merits of his blood and passion, are the only sufficient and worthy causes thereof; and yet notwithstanding, to the attaining of the same justification, God requireth to be in us not only inward contrition, perfect faith and charity, certain hope and confidence, with all other spiritual graces and motions, which, as was said before, must necessarily concur in remission of our sins, that is to say, our justification; but also he requireth and commandeth us, that after we are justified, we must also have good works of charity and obedience towards God, in the observing and fulfilling outwardly of his laws and commandments. For although acceptation to everlasting life be conjoined with justifica-

* In that part of the Institution it is stated, that contrition consists of the knowledge of the filthiness and abomination of our sins, feeling and perceiving that God is displeased for the same, and sorrow and inward shame at having so grievously offended God. With this, in the penitent, is conjoined, faith, trust, and confidence of the mercy of God, "that God will forgive him his sins, and repute him justified, and of the number of his elect children, not for the worthiness of any merit or work done by the penitent, but for the only merits of the blood and passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

tion, yet our good works are necessarily required to the attaining of everlasting life. And we, being justified, are necessarily bound, and it is our necessary duty, to do good works, according to the saying of St. Paul, (Rom. viii.) We are bound not to live according to the flesh and to fleshly appetites ; for if we live so, we shall undoubtedly be damned. And contrary, if we will mortify the deeds of our flesh, and live according to the Spirit, we shall be saved. For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God. And Christ saith, If you will come to heaven, keep the commandments. And St. Paul, speaking of evil works, saith, Whosoever commit sinful deeds, shall never come to heaven. Wherefore all good christian people must understand and believe certainly, that God necessarily requireth of us to do good works commanded by him, and that not only outward and civil works, but also the inward spiritual motions and graces of the Holy Ghost, that is to say, to dread and fear God ; to love God ; to have firm confidence and trust in God ; to invocate and call upon God ; to have patience in all adversities ; to hate sin ; and to have certain purpose and will not to sin again ; and such other like motions and virtues. For Christ saith, We must not only do outward civil good works, but we must also have these aforesaid inward spiritual motions, consenting and agreeable to the law of God.

Letter from Cranmer to Bucer, inviting him over into England.*

The grace and peace of God in Christ.

I have read your letters to John Hales, in which, while relating the lamentable state of Germany, you write that you can hardly expect to minister the word any longer in your city. Deeply grieved, I exclaimed with the psalmist, Show thy marvellous loving kindness, thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in thee, from such as resist thy right hand.

Nor do I doubt but that God will hear this, and the like lamentations of believers ; and that he will preserve and defend against the rage of Satan and of the world, that true doctrine which hitherto has been propagated in

* From the Latin original in Strype's Memorials of Cranmer, App. xliii.

your churches with sincerity. But while the storm rages, those who can no longer keep the sea with safety, should seek shelter in some port. For you, my Bucer, our kingdom will be by far the safest port, in which, by the kindness of God, the seeds of true doctrine are happily sown. Come therefore to us, and give yourself to us as a labourer in the harvest of the Lord; amongst us you will not be less useful to the catholic church of God, than if you could retain your accustomed station. You may also, while absent, be able to do more to heal the wounds of your afflicted country than when present. Delay not, but come to us as speedily as possible. Let us show you that nothing can be more grateful or more pleasing to us than the presence of Bucer. But be careful not to incur danger in your journey. You know there are those that threaten your life—intrust not yourself to their hands. You have with you an English merchant named Richard Hill, a pious and most faithful man,* with whom I wish you to confer as to the whole plan of your journey.

I also most earnestly pray to the everlasting God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in wrath he remember mercy, and behold the calamities of his afflicted church, and kindle more and more the light of true doctrine amongst us. He will not suffer it to be extinguished among you, where it has now shone so clearly for many years. May he also, my Bucer, direct you and preserve you, and bring you safely to us. Farewell. London, 2nd October, 1548.

Most desirous of your coming to us,
THOMAS CRANMER,
Archiep. Cantuar.

Cranmer to Calvin.

As nothing is more destructive to the church than heresies and disputes respecting the doctrines of religion, so nothing is more efficacious in gathering together the churches of God, or more powerfully strengthens the flock of Christ, than the uncorrupted doctrine of the gospel and agreement in opinion. Wherefore I have often desired, and still do desire, that learned and pious men who pass

* Afterwards master of the Merchant Tailors' company, and a large contributor to the endowment of its free school.

others in learning and judgment, should meet in some place free from danger, where by mutual deliberations and comparison of their opinions, they might consider all the points of ecclesiastical doctrine, so that by weighty authority they might hand down to posterity a work, not only rightly setting forth the doctrines themselves, but also the manner in which they should be expressed. Our adversaries now hold a council at Trent, endeavouring to establish errors, and shall we neglect to hold a godly synod, in which we may refute errors, correct erroneous doctrines, and set forth those things which are true? I am told that they are constructing decrees respecting the worship of the bread—surely we ought to use every means possible, not only to fortify others against this idolatry, but also that we ourselves may agree in doctrine respecting this sacrament. You must be well aware how much the dissensions and varieties of opinions respecting this sacrament of unity, have undermined and shaken the church of God. Although in some places these dissensions now no longer exist, yet I would wish for agreement concerning this doctrine, not only as to the matter itself, but also as to the words and manner of expression. I have now stated my desire, which I have also communicated to Melancthon and to Bullinger, and I entreat you to consider amongst yourselves in what manner such a synod may best be assembled. Farewell. From Lambeth, 20th March, 1552.

Your most beloved brother in Christ,

TH. CANTUAR.*

Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, against certain slanders falsely raised upon him. A. D. 1553. see page 56.

As the devil, Christ's ancient adversary, is a liar, and the father of lying, even so hath he stirred up his servants and members, to persecute Christ and his true word and

* Calvin, Op. ix. p. 268. Calvin replied fully approving the plan suggested by Cranmer, lamenting the obstacles which opposed its execution, and his own want of power to forward it; but stating his readiness to do all he was able, and that if he could be of use, he would not hesitate to traverse "ten seas" to promote the accomplishment of such a design. Calv. ix. p. 61. In another letter he urged Cranmer to exert himself to the utmost in forwarding the work of reformation; putting away the errors and superstitions of popery which yet remained.

religion with lying; which he ceases not to do most earnestly at this present time. For whereas the prince of famous memory, king Henry the eighth, seeing the great abuses of the Latin mass, reformed some things therein in his lifetime, and after, our late sovereign lord, king Edward the sixth, took the same wholly away for the manifold and great errors and abuses of the same, and restored in the place thereof, Christ's holy supper according to Christ's own institution, and as the apostles used the same in the primitive church—the devil goeth about now, by lying, to overthrow the Lord's Supper again, and to restore his Latin satisfactory mass; a thing of his own invention and device. And to bring the same more easily to pass, some have abused the name of me, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, bruiting* abroad that I have set up the mass again at Canterbury, and that I offered to say mass at the burial of our late sovereign prince, king Edward the sixth, and that I offered also to say mass before the queen's highness, and at Paul's church, and I wot not where. And although I have been well exercised these twenty years, to suffer and bear evil reports and lies, and have not been much grieved thereat, but have borne all things quietly; yet when untrue reports and lies turn to the hinderance of God's truth, they are in no wise to be suffered.

Wherefore these are to signify unto the world, that it was not I that did set up the mass at Canterbury, but it was a false, flattering, lying, and dissembling monk,† who caused mass to be set up there without my advice and counsel. The Lord render to him in that day. And as for offering myself to say mass before the queen's highness, or in any other place, I never did it, as her grace well knoweth. But if her grace will give me leave, I shall be ready to prove, against all that will say the contrary, that all which is contained in the holy communion set out by the most innocent and godly prince, king Edward the sixth, in his high court of parliament, is conformable to that order which our Saviour Christ did both observe, and command to be observed, and which his apostles and primitive church used many years; whereas the mass, in many things, not only hath no foundation of Christ, his apostles, nor the primitive church, but is manifestly contrary to the same, and contains many horrible abuses in it.

* Noising, reporting. † Dr. Thornton.

And although many, either unlearned or malicious, do report that M. Peter Martyr is unlearned, yet if the queen's highness will grant thereunto, I, with the said M. Peter Martyr, and other four or five whom I shall choose, will, by God's grace, take upon us to defend, not only the common prayers of the church, the ministration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies; but also all the doctrine and religion set out by our said sovereign lord, king Edward the sixth, to be more pure and according to God's word, than any other that hath been used in England these thousand years, so that God's word may be the judge, and that the reasons and proofs of both parties may be set out in writing, to the intent, as well that all the world may examine and judge thereon, as that no man shall start back from his writing. And where they boast of the faith that hath been in the church these fifteen hundred years, we will join with them in this point, and that the same doctrine and usage is to be followed which was in the church fifteen hundred years past. And we shall prove that the order of the church, set out at this present in this realm by act of parliament, is the same that was used in the church fifteen hundred years past; and so shall they never be able to prove theirs.*

* Terentian, an Italian, who accompanied Peter Martyr to England, relates some particulars of Cranmer at this period. He says, that on the accession of Mary, Peter Martyr was confined to his house for six weeks before he obtained permission to leave Oxford. He adds,

"Martyr then came to London, and went to the archbishop of Canterbury, his ancient and pious host. Who can express how much he rejoiced to see him? He had so earnestly desired his coming, that he had repeatedly applied to the council, and offered to become surety in all he was worth, if they were fearful that Martyr would endeavour to flee. When Martyr came, the archbishop told him how he had provided placards to be fixed up throughout London, in which he offered to prove that the doctrine received under Edward the sixth was wholesome, agreeable to scripture, conformable to the primitive hurch, and supported by the authority of the ancient fathers, if they would allow him, Martyr, and one other to be his assistants. Martyr approved this, and said he should have advised it, had it not been already done. They prepared themselves for disputations. You ought to be told that the popish preachers boasted much of their readiness to dispute when they saw many of our people imprisoned, and that others had fled away. But when the archbishop's placards appeared, the papists began another song—namely, There must not be any disputations, things must be received as they are, it is a matter of faith, not of reasoning. These placards of the archbishop have so confirmed the minds of pious men, that they are no longer afraid to die for the truth. The adversaries, however, were so enraged, that they instantly brought forward a new charge against the archbishop, accusing him of treason, and summoned him to trial, which happened in the

*A writing or letter of archbishop Cranmer sent to queen Mary.**

It may please your Majesty to pardon my presumption, that I dare be so bold to write to your highness. But very necessity constrains me, that your majesty may know my mind, rather by mine own writing, than by other men's reports. So it is that upon Wednesday, being the twelfth day of this month, I was cited to appear at Rome, the eightieth day after, there to make answer to such matters as should be objected against me upon the behalf of the king and your most excellent majesty, which matters the Thursday following were objected against me by doctor Martin and doctor Story, your majesty's proctors, before the bishop of Gloucester, sitting in judgment by commission from Rome. But, alas, it cannot but grieve the heart of a natural subject, to be accused of the king and queen of his own realm; and especially before an outward judge,† or by authority coming from any person out of this realm; where the king and queen, as though they were subjects within their own realm, shall complain, and require justice at a stranger's hands against their own subject, being already condemned to death by their own laws. As though the king and queen could not do or have justice within their own realms, against their own subjects, but they must seek it at stranger's hands in a strange land; the like whereof, I think, was never seen. I would have wished to have had some meaner adversaries; and I think that

month of September. I do not recollect the precise day, but it was on a Thursday. Martyr had dined with the archbishop; after dinner the latter went to Martyr's couch, and told him that he was summoned to appear before his judges, and that he would never see him again. He then told him to urge that the public faith was engaged for his safety, and to depart if he could obtain permission; if not, to flee, for no justice was to be expected from his enemies." The writer then relates that Martyr soon afterwards was permitted to depart, while Cranmer, with many others, were imprisoned in the Tower, and that Cranmer and lady Jane were condemned on the 14th of November; the former being sentenced to be hanged and quartered. (Ep. Helv. Refor. 76.)

* This letter was written immediately after Cranmer had been cited to appear at Rome within eighty days, though he was detained a prisoner, notwithstanding he had stated his readiness to proceed thither. Cardinal Pole wrote two replies, which are too feeble and contemptible to require notice. Pole was appointed Cranmer's successor in the see of Canterbury, on which the reproof of Elijah to Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 19, "Hast thou killed and taken possession?" was applied to him.

† Foreign judge.

death shall not grieve me much more, than to have my most dread and most gracious sovereign lord and lady, to whom under God I owe all obedience, to be mine accusers in judgment within their own realm, before any stranger and outward power. But, forasmuch as in the time of the prince of most famous memory, king Henry the eighth, your grace's father, I was sworn never to consent that the bishop of Rome should have or exercise any authority or jurisdiction in this realm of England, therefore lest I should allow his authority contrary to mine oath, I refused to make answer to the bishop of Gloucester sitting here in judgment by the pope's authority, lest I should run into perjury.

Another cause why I refused the pope's authority, is this, that his authority as he claims it, repugns to the imperial crown of this realm, and to the laws of the same; which every true subject is bound to defend. First, for that the pope saith, that all manner of power, as well temporal as spiritual, is given first to him of God, and that the temporal power he giveth unto emperors and kings, to use it under him, but so as that it be always at his commandment and beck.

But contrary to this claim, the imperial crown and jurisdiction temporal of this realm, is taken immediately from God, to be used under him only, and is subject unto none, but to God alone.

Moreover, to the imperial laws and customs of this realm, the king in his coronation, and all justices when they receive their offices, are sworn, and all the whole realm is bound to defend and maintain. But contrary hereunto, the pope by his authority makes void, and commands to blot out of our books, all laws and customs being repugnant to his laws, and declares to be accursed all rulers and governors, all the makers, writers, and executors of such laws or customs; as appears by many of the pope's laws, whereof I shall rehearse one or two. In the decrees, Dist. x. is written thus: "The constitutions or statutes enacted against the canons and decrees of the bishops of Rome or their good customs, are of none effect." Also, "We excommunicate all heretics of both sexes, what name soever they are called by, and their fautors* and receptors and defenders; and also them that shall hereafter cause to be observed the statutes and customs

* Favourers.

made against the liberty of the church, except they cause the same to be put out of their records and chapters within two months after the publication of this sentence. Also we excommunicate the statute makers and writers of those statutes, and also the potentates, consuls, governors, and counsellors of places, where such statutes and customs shall be made or kept; and also those that shall presume to give judgment according to them, or shall notify in public form of writing the matter so adjudged."

Now by these laws, if the bishop of Rome's authority, which he claims by God, be lawful, all your grace's laws and customs of your realm, being contrary to the pope's laws, are naught, and as well your majesty, as your judges, justices, and all other executors of the same, stand accursed, amongst heretics, which God forbid. And yet this curse can never be avoided, if the pope have such power as he claims, until such times as the laws and customs of this realm, being contrary to his laws, are taken away and blotted out of the law books. And although there are many laws of this realm contrary to the laws of Rome, yet I named but a few; as to convict a clerk* before any temporal judge of this realm for debt, felony, murder, or for any other crime; which clerks by the pope's laws are so exempt from the king's laws, that they can be no where sued, but before their ordinary.

Also the pope by his laws may give all bishoprics and spiritual benefices; which, by the laws of this realm, can be given only by the king and other patrons of the same, except they fall into the lapse.

By the pope's laws, the right of patronage shall be sued only before the ecclesiastical judge; but by the laws of the realm, it shall be sued before the temporal judge.

And to be short, the laws of this realm do agree with the pope's laws like fire and water. And yet the kings of this realm have provided for their laws by the premunire: so that if any man have hindered the execution of the laws of this realm by any authority from the see of Rome, he falleth into the premunire.†

But to meet with this, the popes have provided for their laws by cursing. For whosoever hindereth the pope's laws to have full course within this realm, by the pope's power stands accursed. So that the pope's power treads

* An ecclesiastic.

† Or forfeiture of all his property.

all the laws and customs of this realm under his feet, cursing all that execute them, until such time as they give place unto his laws.

But it may be said, that notwithstanding all the pope's decrees, yet we execute still the laws and customs of this realm. Nay, not all quietly without interruption of the pope. And where we do execute them, yet we do it unjustly, if the pope's power be of force, and for the same we stand excommunicated, and shall do so, until we leave the execution of our own laws and customs. Thus we are well reconciled to Rome, allowing such authority, whereby the realm stands accursed before God, if the pope have any such authority.

These things, as I suppose, were not fully opened in the parliament house, when the pope's authority was received again within this realm; for if they had, I do not believe that either the king or queen's majesty, or the nobles of this realm, or the commons of the same, would ever have consented to receive again such a foreign authority, so injurious, hurtful, and prejudicial, as well to the crown, as to the laws and customs and state of this realm, as whereby they must needs acknowledge themselves to be accursed. But none could open this matter well but the clergy, and such of them as had read the pope's laws, whereby the pope hath made himself as it were a god. These seek to maintain the pope, whom they desired to have their chief head, to the intent they might have, as it were, a kingdom and laws within themselves, distinct from the laws of the crown, and wherewith the crown may not meddle; and so being exempted from the laws of the crown, might live in this realm like lords and kings, without damage or fear of any man, so that they please their high and supreme head at Rome. For this consideration, I ween, some that knew the truth, held their peace in the parliament, whereas if they had done their duties to the crown and whole realm, they should have opened their mouths, declared the truth, and showed the perils and dangers that might ensue to the crown and realm.

And if I should agree to allow such authority within this realm, whereby I must needs confess, that your most gracious highness, and also your realm should ever continue accursed, until you shall cease from the execution of your own laws and customs of your realm; I could not think

myself true, either to your highness, or to this my natural country, knowing what I do know. Ignorance, I know, may excuse other men; but he that knoweth how prejudicial and injurious the power and authority which he challenges everywhere, is to the crown, laws, and customs of this realm, and yet will allow the same, I cannot see in anywise how he can keep his due allegiance, fidelity, and truth to the crown and state of this realm.

Another cause I alleged, why I could not allow the authority of the pope, which is this: That by his authority he subverteth not only the laws of this realm, but also the laws of God; so that whosoever is under his authority, he suffers them not to be under Christ's religion purely, as Christ did command. And for one example I brought forth, that whereas by God's laws all christian people are bounden diligently to learn his word, that they may know how to believe and live accordingly, for that purpose he ordained holy days, when they ought, leaving apart all other business, to give themselves wholly to know and serve God. Therefore God's will and commandment is, that when the people be gathered together, that ministers should use such language as the people may understand and take profit thereby, or else hold their peace. For as a harp or lute, if it give no certain sound that men may know what is stricken, who can dance after it? for all the sound is in vain. So is it in vain and profits nothing, saith almighty God by the mouth of St. Paul, if the priest speak to the people in a language which they know not. For else he may profit himself: but profiteth not the people, saith St. Paul. But herein I was answered thus: That St. Paul spake only of preaching; that the preacher should speak in a tongue which the people did know, or else his preaching availed nothing; but if the preaching availed nothing, being spoken in a language which the people understand not, how should any other service avail them, being spoken in the same language? And yet that St. Paul meant not only of preaching appears plainly by his own words. For he speaks by name expressly of praying, lauding, and thanking of God, and of all other things which the priests say in the churches, whereunto the people say Amen; which they use not in preaching, but in other divine service; that whether the priests rehearse the wonderful works of God, or the

great benefits of God unto mankind above all other creatures, or give thanks unto God, or make open profession of their faith, or humble confession of their sins, with earnest request of mercy and forgiveness, or make suit or request unto God for any thing; then all the people, understanding what the priests say, might give their minds and join voices with them, and say Amen. That is to say, allow what the priests say, that the rehearsal of God's universal works and benefits, the giving of thanks, the profession of faith, the confession of sins, and the requests and petitions of the priests and of the people, might ascend up into the ears of God altogether, and be as a sweet savour, odour, and incense: and thus was it used many hundred years after Christ's ascension. But the foresaid things cannot be done when the priests speak to the people in a language not known, and so they, or their clerk in their name, say Amen, but they cannot tell whereunto. Whereas St. Paul saith, How can the people say "Amen" to thy well saying, when they understand not what thou sayest? And thus was St. Paul understood of all interpreters, both the Greeks and Latins, old and new, school authors and others, that I have read, until about thirty years past. At which time one Eckius,* with others of his sort, began to devise a new exposition, understanding St. Paul of preaching only.

But when a good number of the best learned men reputed within this realm, some favouring the old, some the new learning, as they term it, where indeed that which they call the old is the new, and that which they call the new, is indeed the old; but when a great number of such learned men of both sorts, were gathered together at Windsor, for the reformation of the service of the church;† it was agreed by both, without controversy, not one saying contrary, that the service of the church ought to be in the mother tongue, and that St. Paul, in the fourteenth chapter to the Corinthians, was so to be understood. And so is St. Paul to be understood in the civil law, more than a thousand years past, where Justinian, a most godly emperor, in a synod writes on this manner: "We command that all bishops and priests celebrate the holy oblation and prayers used in holy baptism, not after a still and close

* The bitter opponent of Luther. See History of the Church of Christ.

† The papists and protestants both agreed in Windsor, that the service of the church should be in the mother tongue. Anno 1549.

manner, but with a clear loud voice, that they may be plainly heard of the faithful people, so that the hearers' minds may be lifted up thereby with the greater devotion, in uttering the praises of the Lord God. For so Paul teaches also in the epistle to the Corinthians. If the spirit do only bless, or say well, how shall he that occupieth the place of a private person, say 'Amen' to thy thanksgiving: for he perceives not what thou sayest; thou dost give thanks well, but the other is not edified." And not only the civil law, and all other writers, a thousand and five hundred years continually together, have expounded St. Paul, not of preaching only, but of other service said in the church; but also reason gives the same, that if men be commanded to hear any thing, it must be spoken in a language which the hearers understand, or else, as St. Paul saith, what avails it to hear? So that the pope giving a contrary commandment, that the people coming to the church shall hear they know not what, and shall answer they know not whereunto, takes upon him to command, not only against reason, but also directly against God.

And again, I said, Whereas our Saviour Christ ordained the sacrament of his most precious body and blood to be received of all christian people under the forms of bread and wine, and said of the cup, Drink ye all of this; the pope gives a clean contrary commandment, that no layman shall drink of the cup of their salvation: as though the cup of salvation by the blood of Christ pertained not to laymen. And whereas Theophilus Alexandrinus, whose works St. Jerome did translate about eleven hundred years past, saith, that if Christ had been crucified for the devils, his cup should not be denied them, yet the pope denies the cup of Christ to christian people, for whom Christ was crucified. So that if I should obey the pope in these things, I must needs disobey my Saviour Christ. But I was answered hereunto, as commonly the papists do answer, that under the form of bread is whole Christ's flesh and blood: so that whosoever receives the form of bread, receiveth as well Christ's blood as his flesh. Let it be so, yet in the form of bread only, Christ's blood is not drunken, but eaten; nor is received in the cup under the form of wine, as Christ commanded, but eaten with the flesh under the form of bread. And moreover, the bread is not the sacrament of his blood, but of his flesh only; and the cup is not the sacrament of his flesh, but of his blood only.

And so the pope keeps from all lay persons the sacrament of their redemption by Christ's blood, which Christ commands to be given unto them.

And furthermore, Christ ordained the sacrament in two kinds, the one separated from the other, to be a representation of his death, where his blood was separated from his flesh, which is not represented in one kind alone. So that the lay people receive not the whole sacrament, whereby Christ's death is represented, as he commanded.

Moreover, as the pope takes upon him to give the temporal sword by royal and imperial power, to kings and princes; so does he likewise take upon him to depose them from their imperial states, if they are disobedient to him, and commands the subjects to disobey their princes; assoiling* the subjects as well of their obedience, as of their lawful oaths made unto their true kings and princes, directly contrary to God's commandment, who commands all subjects to obey their kings or their rulers under them.

One John, patriarch of Constantinople in the time of St. Gregory, claimed superiority above all other bishops. To whom St. Gregory wrote, that therein he did injury to his three brethren, who were equal with him, that is to say, the bishop of Rome, the bishop of Alexandria, and of Antioch; which three were patriarchal sees, as well as Constantinople, and were brethren one to another. But, saith St. Gregory, If any one shall exalt himself, above all the rest, to be the universal bishop, the same passeth in pride. But now the bishop of Rome exalts himself, not only above all kings and emperors, and above all the whole world, but takes upon him to give and take away, to set up and pull down, as he shall think good. And as the devil, having no such authority, yet took upon him to give unto Christ all the kingdoms of the world, if he would fall down and worship him; in like manner the pope takes upon him to give empires and kingdoms, being none of his, to such as will fall down and worship him, and kiss his feet.

And moreover, his lawyers and glossers so flatter him, that they say he may command emperors and kings to hold his stirrup when he lighteth upon his horse, and to be his footmen; and that, if any emperor and king give him any thing, they give him nothing but what is his own, and that he may dispense against God's word, against

* Absolving.

both the old and new testament, against St. Paul's epistles, and against the gospel. And furthermore whatsoever he doth, although he draw innumerable people by heaps with himself into hell, yet may no mortal man reprove him, because he, being judge of all men, may be judged of no man. And thus he sitteth in the temple of God, as he were a God, and nameth himself God's vicar, and yet he dispenses against God. If this be not to play antichrist's part, I cannot tell what is antichrist, which is no more to say, but Christ's enemy and adversary; who shall sit in the temple of God, advancing himself above all other, yet by hypocrisy and feigned religion, shall subvert the true religion of Christ, and under pretence and colour of christian religion shall work against Christ, and therefore hath the name of antichrist. Now if any man lift himself higher than the pope hath done, who lifteth himself above all the world, or can be more adversary to Christ, than to dispense against God's laws, and where Christ hath given any commandment, to command directly the contrary, that man must needs be taken for antichrist. But until the time that such a person may be found, men may easily conjecture where to find antichrist.

Wherefore, seeing the pope thus, to overthrow both God's laws and man's laws, taketh upon him to make emperors and kings to be vassals and subjects unto him, especially the crown of this realm, with the laws and customs of the same; I see no mean how I may consent to admit this usurped power within this realm, contrary to mine oath, mine obedience to God's law, mine allegiance and duty to your majesty, and my love and affection to this realm.

This that I have spoken against the power and authority of the pope, I have not spoken, I take God to record and judge, for any malice I owe to the pope's person, whom I know not, but I shall pray to God to give him grace, that he may seek above all things to promote God's honour and glory, and not to follow the manner of his predecessors in these latter days.

Nor have I spoken it for fear of punishment, and to avoid the same, thinking it rather an occasion to aggravate than to diminish my trouble; but I have spoken it for my most bounden duty to the crown, liberties, laws, and customs of this realm of England, but most especially to discharge my conscience in uttering the truth to God's

glory, casting away all fear by the comfort which I have in Christ's words, who saith; Fear not them that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul, but fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell fire. He that for fear to lose this life will forsake the truth, shall lose the everlasting life; and he that for the truth's sake will spend his life, shall find everlasting life. And Christ promises to stand fast with them before his Father, who will stand fast with him here. Which comfort is so great, that whosoever hath his eyes fixed upon Christ, cannot greatly pass on this life, knowing that he may be sure to have Christ stand by him in the presence of his Father in heaven.

And as touching the sacrament, I said: Forasmuch as the whole matter standeth in the understanding of these words of Christ; This is my body; This is my blood; I said that Christ in these words made demonstration of the bread and wine, and spake figuratively, calling bread his body, and wine his blood, because he ordained them to be the sacraments of his body and blood. And where the papists say in those two points contrary unto me, that Christ called not bread his body, but a substance uncertain, nor spake figuratively: herein I said, I would be judged by the old church, and which doctrine could be proved the elder, that I would stand unto. And forasmuch as I have alleged in my book many old authors, both Greeks and Latins, which, above a thousand years after Christ, continually taught as I do; if they could bring forth but one old author, that saith in these two points as they say, I offered six or seven years ago, and do offer yet still, that I will give place unto them.

But when I bring forth any author that saith in most plain terms as I do, yet saith the other part, that the authors meant not so: as who should say, that the authors spake one thing, and meant clean contrary. And upon the other part when they cannot find any one author, that saith in words as they say, yet say they that the authors meant as they say. Now, whether I or they speak more to the purpose herein, I refer me to the judgment of all indifferent hearers; yea the old church of Rome above a thousand years together, neither believed nor used the sacrament, as the church of Rome hath done of late years.

For in the beginning, the church of Rome taught a pure and a sound doctrine of the sacrament. But after that the church of Rome fell into a new doctrine of

transubstantiation ; with the doctrine they changed the use of the sacrament contrary to that Christ commanded, and the old church of Rome used above a thousand years. And yet to deface the old, they say that the new is the old ; wherein for my part I am content to stand to the trial. But their doctrine is so fond and uncomfortable, that I marvel that any man would allow it, if he knew what it is. And whatsoever they bear the people in hand, that which they write in their book, hath neither truth nor comfort.

For by their doctrine, of one body of Christ, is made two bodies ; one natural, having distance of members, with form and proportion of man's perfect body, and this body is in heaven. But the body of Christ in the sacrament, by their own doctrine, must needs be a monstrous body, having neither distance of members, nor form, fashion, or proportion of a man's natural body. And such a body is in the sacrament, teach they, and it goeth into the mouth with the form of bread, and enters no further than the form of bread goeth, nor tarries longer than the form of bread is by natural heat in digesting. So that when the form of bread is digested, that body of Christ is gone. And forasmuch as evil men are as long in digesting as good men, the body of Christ, by their doctrine, enters as far, and tarries as long in wicked men as in godly men. And what comfort can be herein to any christian man, to receive Christ's unshapen body, and it to enter no further than the stomach, and to depart by-and-by as soon as the bread is consumed ?

It seems to me a more sound and comfortable doctrine that Christ hath but one body, and that hath form and fashion of a man's true body ; which body spiritually entereth into the whole man, body and soul ; and though the sacrament be consumed, yet whole Christ remaineth, and feedeth the receiver unto eternal life, if he continue in godliness, and never departs until the receiver forsake him. And as for the wicked, they have not Christ within them at all, who cannot be where Belial is. And this is my faith, and, as to me seemeth, a sound doctrine, according to God's word, and sufficient for a christian to believe in that matter. And if it can be showed unto me, that the pope's authority is not prejudicial to the things before mentioned, or that my doctrine in the sacrament is erroneous, which I think cannot be showed, then I was never, nor will be, so perverse to stand wilfully in mine own opinion, but I

shall with all humility submit myself unto the pope, not only to kiss his feet, but another part also.

Another cause why I refused to take the bishop of Gloucester for my judge, was the respect of his own person, being more than once perjured. First, for that he, being divers times sworn never to consent that the bishop of Rome should have any jurisdiction within this realm, but to take the king and his successors for supreme heads of this realm, as by God's laws they are, contrary to that lawful oath, the said bishop sat then in judgment by authority from Rome, wherein he was perjured, and not worthy to sit as a judge.

The second perjury was, that he took his bishopric both of the queen's majesty and of the pope, making to each of them a solemn oath: which oaths are so contrary, that in the one he must needs be perjured. And, furthermore, in swearing to the pope to maintain his laws, decrees, constitutions, ordinances, reservations, and provisions, he declares himself an enemy to the imperial crown, and to the laws and state of this realm, whereby he declares himself not worthy to sit as a judge within this realm. And for these considerations I refused to take him for my judge.

This was written in another Letter to the Queen.

I learned by doctor Martin, that at the day of your Majesty's coronation, you took an oath of obedience to the pope of Rome, and the same time you took another oath to this realm, to maintain the laws, liberties, and customs of the same. And if your majesty did make an oath to the pope, I think it was according to the other oaths which he uses to minister to princes; which is, to be obedient to him, to defend his person, to maintain his authority, honour, laws, lands, and privileges. And if it be so, which I know not but by report, then I beseech your majesty to look upon your oath made to the crown and realm, and to expend and weigh the two oaths together, to see how they agree, and then do as your grace's conscience shall give you. For I am surely persuaded, that willingly your majesty will not offend, nor do against your conscience for no thing.

But I fear me that there be contradictions in your oaths,

and that those who should have informed your grace thoroughly, did not their duties therein. And if your majesty ponder the two oaths diligently, I think you shall perceive you were deceived; and then your highness may use the matter as God shall put in your heart. Furthermore, I am kept here from company of learned men, from books, from counsel, from pen and ink, saving at this time to write unto your majesty, which all were necessary for a man being in my case. Wherefore I beseech your majesty, that I may have such of these as may stand with your majesty's pleasure. And as for my appearance at Rome, if your majesty will give me leave, I will appear there. And I trust that God shall put in my mouth to defend his truth there, as well as here. But I refer it wholly to your majesty's pleasure.

A letter of Dr. Cranmer, archbishop, to a Lawyer, for the drawing out of his appeal.

The law of nature requires of all men, that so far forth as it may be done without offence to God, every one should seek to defend and preserve his own life. Which when I, about three days ago, bethought myself of, and therewithal remembered how that Martin Luther appealed in his time from pope Leo the tenth, to a general council,* lest I should seem rashly and unadvisedly to cast away myself, I determined to appeal in like sort to some lawful and free general council. But, seeing the order and form of an appeal pertains to the lawyers, whereof I myself am ignorant, and seeing that Luther's appeal cometh not to my hand, I purposed to break my mind in this matter to some faithful friend, skilful in the law, whose help I might use in this behalf, and you only among others came to my remembrance as a man most meet in this university for my purpose. But this is a matter that requires great silence, so that no man know of it before it be done. It is so that I am summoned to make mine answer at Rome, the sixteenth day of this month; before which day I think it good, after sentence pronounced, to make mine appeal. But whether I should first appeal from the judge delegate to the pope, and so afterwards to the general council, or

* See History of the Church of Christ, vol. iv. p. 305.

else, leaving the pope, I should appeal immediately to the council, herein I stand in need of your counsel.

Many causes there are for which I think good to appeal. First, because I am by an oath bound, never to consent to the receiving of the bishop of Rome's authority into this realm. Besides this, whereas I utterly refused to make answer to the articles objected unto me by the bishop of Gloucester, appointed by the pope to be my judge, yet I was content to answer Martin and Story, with this protestation, that mine answer should not be taken as made before a judge, nor yet in place of judgment, but as pertaining nothing to judgment at all. And moreover, after I had made mine answer, I required to have a copy of the same, that I might either by adding thereunto, or by altering or taking from it, correct and amend it as I thought good. The which though both the bishop of Gloucester, and also the king and queen's proctors promised me, yet have they altogether broken promise with me, and have not permitted me to correct my said answers according to my request, and yet notwithstanding, they have, as I understand, registered the same as acts formally done in place of judgment.

Finally, forasmuch as all this my trouble comes upon my departing from the bishop of Rome, and from the popish religion, so that now the quarrel is betwixt the pope himself and me, and no man can be a lawful and indifferent judge in his own cause; it seems, methinks, good reason, that I should be suffered to appeal to some general council in this matter, especially seeing the law of nature, as they say, denies no man the remedy of appeal in such cases.

Now, since it is very requisite that this matter should be kept as close as may be, if, perhaps, for lack of perfect skill herein, you shall have need of further advice, then I beseech you, even for the fidelity and love you bear to me in Christ, that you will open to no creature alive whose the case is. And forasmuch as the time is now at hand, and the matter requires great expedition, let me obtain this much of you, I beseech you, that laying aside all other your studies and business for the time, you will apply to this my matter only, till you have brought it to pass. The chief cause in very deed, to tell you the truth, of this mine appeal is, that I might gain time, if it shall so please God, to live until I have finished mine answer against

Marcus Antonius Constantius,* which I have now in hand. But if the adversaries of the truth will not admit mine appeal, as I fear they will not, God's will be done; I pass not upon it, so that God may therein be glorified, be it by my life, or by my death. For it is much better for me to die in Christ's quarrel, and to reign with him, than here to be shut up, and kept in the prison of this body, unless it were to continue yet still awhile in this warfare, for the commodity and profit of my brethren, and to the further advancing of God's glory. To whom be all glory for evermore. Amen.

There is also yet another cause why I think good to appeal, that whereas I am cited to go to Rome to answer there for myself, I am notwithstanding kept here fast in prison, that I cannot there appear at the time appointed. And, moreover, forasmuch as the state I stand in is a matter of life and death, so that I have great need of learned counsel for my defence in this behalf; yet when I made my earnest request for the same, all manner of counsel and help of proctors, advocates, and lawyers was utterly denied me.

Your loving friend,
THOMAS CRANMER.

A letter of Dr. Cranmer, archbishop, to mistress Wilkinson, exhorting her to flee in the time of persecution, and to seek her dwelling where she might serve God according to his word.

The true comforter in all distress, is only God, through his Son Jesus Christ, and whosoever hath him, hath company enough, although he were in a wilderness all alone; and he that hath twenty thousand in his company, if God be absent, is in a miserable wilderness and desolation. In him is all comfort, and without him is none. Wherefore I beseech you, seek your dwelling there where you may truly and rightly serve God, and dwell in him, and have him ever dwelling in you. What can be so heavy a burden as an unquiet conscience, to be in such a place as a man

* This Constantius was Stephen Gardiner, as *constant* indeed as a weathercock, who thus named himself, writing against this good archbishop.—*Letters of the Martyrs.*

cannot be suffered to serve God in Christ's religion? If you are loth to depart from your kin and friends, remember that Christ calls them his mother, sisters, and brothers, that do his Father's will. Where we find therefore God truly honoured according to his will, there we can lack neither friend nor kin.

If you are loth to depart for slandering of God's word, remember that Christ, when his hour was not yet come, departed out of his country into Samaria, to avoid the malice of the scribes and pharisees; and commanded his apostles, that if they were pursued in one place, they should flee to another; and was not Paul let down by a basket out at a window, to avoid the persecution of Aretas? And what wisdom and policy he used from time to time to escape the malice of his enemies, the Acts of the apostles do declare. And after the same sort did the other apostles; albeit, when it came to such a point, that they could no longer escape danger of the persecutors of God's true religion, then they showed themselves, that their flying fore came not of fear, but of godly wisdom to do more good; and that they would not rashly, without urgent necessity, offer themselves to death, which had been but a temptation of God. Yea, when they were apprehended, and could no longer avoid, then they stood boldly to the profession of Christ; then they showed how little they passed of death; how much they feared God more than men; how much they loved and preferred the eternal life to come, above this short and miserable life.

Wherefore I exhort you, as well by Christ's commandment, as by the example of him and his apostles, to withdraw yourself from the malice of your and God's enemies, into some place where God is most purely served; which is no slandering of the truth, but a preserving of yourself to God and the truth, and to the society and comfort of Christ's little flock. And what you will do, do it with speed, lest by your own folly you fall into the persecutors' hands. And the Lord send his Holy Spirit to lead and guide you wheresoever you go, and all that be godly will say Amen.*

* Mrs. Wilkinson was "a woman of good quality, and a great reliever of good men."—*Strype.* Several letters of other martyrs are addressed to her.

To Sir William Cecil.

To my very loving friend sir William Cecil, knight.

After my very hearty recommendations—Yesternight I heard reported that Mr. Cheke is indicted. I pray you heartily if you know any thing thereof to send me knowledge, and whereupon he is indicted. I had great trust that he should be one of them that should feel the queen's great mercy and pardon, as one who hath been none of the great doers in this matter against her; and my trust is not yet gone, except it be for his earnestness in religion. For the which if he suffer, blessed is he of God, that suffereth for his sake, howsoever the world judge of him. For what ought we to care for the judgment of the world when God absolveth us? But alas if any means could be made for him, or for my lord Russel, it were not to be omitted, nor in any wise neglected. But I am utterly destitute of counsel in this matter, or of power, being in the same condemnation that they are. But that only thing which I can do, I shall not cease to do, and that is only to pray for them and for myself, with all others that are now in adversity.

When I saw you at the court, I would fain have talked with you, but I durst not. Nevertheless if you could find a time to come over to me, I would gladly commune with you. Thus fare you heartily well, with my lady your wife.

From Lambeth, this 14th day of this month of August, 1553.

Your own assured,

T. C.*

* This letter was written by Cranmer soon after the accession of queen Mary, when he was uncertain what proceedings would be adopted against himself. In the early part of August he was called before the council, reprimanded for the part he had taken in behalf of lady Jane, and ordered to keep his house. While before the council he saw sir William Cecil, afterwards lord Burghley, who was in trouble for the same cause, but he did not dare to communicate with him.

Cecil was one of king Edward's ministers of state; he was pardoned by Mary. By the favour of cardinal Pole and some other friends of influence, he continued unmolested during her reign, and was a great promoter of the reformation under Elizabeth. Cheke was also one of Edward's ministers, and had been one of his instructors. He also was pardoned and allowed to go to the continent, but venturing to Brussels, he was seized and sent over to England, where he was compelled to recant and profess popery, but died soon after for grief. Lord Russel was son of the earl of Bedford, he was imprisoned for his religion, but afterwards released. Two of Bradford's letters are addressed to him.

WRITINGS

OF

ROGERS, SAUNDERS, TAYLOR,

AND CARELESS.

Confessors and Martys, A. D. 1555—1556.

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CONTENTS.

ROGERS.

Page

THE Life, Admonition, and Martyrdom of John Rogers..... 2
His Examination and Answer, made to the Lord Chancellor and to the rest of the Council, 22nd January, 1555; penned by himself..... 4
The second Confession of John Rogers..... 11
The Sentence condemnatory against him..... 19
Other good matter, penned by himself while in prison..... 22
His Sufferings and Death..... 33
Preface by Rogers, to a work entitled "A Weighing and Considering of the Interim," by Philip Melancthon..... ... 38

SAUNDERS.

The History and Martyrdom of M. Laurence Saunders..... 41

LETTERS OF LAURENCE SAUNDERS.

I. To Master Robert Glover and John Glover..... 45
II. To the Bishop of Winchester, as an answer to certain things wherewith he had before charged him..... 45
III. To Archbishop Cranmer, Bishop Ridley, and M. Latimer... 48
IV. To M. Farrar, Bishop of St. David's, D. Taylor, M. Bradford, and M. Philpot..... 51
V. To the Professors of the Gospel in the Town of Litchfield. 52
VI. His first Letter to Mrs. Harrington..... 59
VII. To Mrs. Lucy Harrington..... 62
VIII. To the same..... 64
IX. To a certain Backslider from the truth of God's Word.... 65
X. To his Wife..... 68
XI. To the same..... 69
XII. To his Wife, and other of his dear Friends and Lovers in the Lord..... 70
XIII. To his Wife, with a certain remembrance to M. Harrington and M. Hurland..... 72
XIV. To the same..... 74
XV. To his Wife, and others of the Faithful, after his condemnation to the fire..... 75
XVI. To his Wife, a little before his burning..... 78
XVII. To R. and J. Glover, written the morning that he was burned 78

TAYLOR.

The History of Dr. Rowland Taylor..... 80
A Letter of Dr. Taylor, reporting the talk between him and the Lord Chancellor, and other Commissioners, 22nd January, 1555 91
A brief recapitulation of Dr. Taylor's causes aforetouched..... 95

Page
Dr. Taylor's examination, the fourth time, with M. Bradford and M. Saunders, before Winchester and other Bishops..... 97
His last Will and Testament..... 100
His Farewell to his Wife and Children 103
His Death on Aldham Common 108

CARELESS.

A brief Account of John Careless..... 112
His Examination before Dr. Martin 113
Letters of that faithful man of God, John Careless.
I. To his Brethren in Newgate..... 119
II. To M. Green, M. Whittle, and other Prisoners in Newgate 124
III. To William Tyms, prisoner in Newgate..... 127
IV. To M. John Philpot, then in the Stocks, in the Bishop of London's coal-house 131
V. To M. John Bradford..... 135
The Letter of Bradford to Careless, to which the preceding was written as an answer..... 138
VI. To his Wife..... 139
VII. To Mrs. A. K. 142
VIII. To E. K..... 146
IX. To M. C. 148
X. To M. C..... 150
XI. To Mrs. Cotton 152
XII. To T. V..... 153
XIII. To T. V..... 155
XIV. To T. V..... 158
XV. To T. V..... 160
XVI. To Henry Adlington, prisoner in the Lollard's Tower.... 164
XVII. To William Aylesbury 168
XVIII. To A. B..... 170
XIX. To Elizabeth, wife of A. B..... 173
XX. To a faithful Friend by whom he had received much comfort in his trouble and affliction..... 177
XXI. To a faithful friend by whom he had received much comfort in his inward troubles..... 178
XXII. To Agnes Glascock 180
XXIII. To the same..... 182
XXIV. To the same 183
XXV. To Augustine Bernher..... 186
XXVI. To Mary Glover 190
XXVII. To the Faithful in the City of London..... 193
Confession of Faith of Rogers, Taylor, and others... 206

THE

STORY, LIFE, ADMONITION, AND MARTYRDOM,

OF

JOHN ROGERS,

Prebendary of St. Paul's,

AND

THE FIRST MARTYR IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY.

A. D. 1555.

THE

LIFE, ADMONITION, AND MARTYRDOM

OF

JOHN ROGERS.

John Rogers was brought up in the university of Cambridge, where he profitably travailed in good learning, and at the length was chosen and called by the merchants adventurers to be their chaplain at Antwerp in Brabant. He served them to their good contentment many years. He there fell in company with that worthy servant and martyr of God, William Tindal, and with Miles Coverdale, both of whom, for the hatred they bare to popish superstitions and idolatry, and love to true religion, had forsaken their native country. In conferring the scriptures with them, he came to great knowledge in the gospel of God, insomuch that he cast off the heavy yoke of popery, perceiving it to be impure and filthy idolatry, and joined himself with them two, in that most painful and profitable labour of translating the bible into the English tongue, which is entitled, The Translation of Thomas Mathew.* He, knowing by the scriptures that unlawful vows may lawfully be broken, and that matrimony is both honest and honourable amongst all men, joined himself in lawful matrimony; and so went to Wittemberg in Saxony, where he with much soberness of living did not only greatly increase in all good and godly learning, but also so much profited in the knowledge of the German tongue, that the charge of a congregation was orderly committed to his cure.

In which ministry he diligently and faithfully served many years, until such time as it pleased God by the faithful travail of his chosen and dear servant king Edward the sixth, utterly to banish all popery out of England, and to receive in true religion, setting God's gospel at liberty. He

* This was the second printed edition of the English bible; it was edited by Coverdale, assisted by Rogers, and was sanctioned by royal authority. The new testament, and the first half of the old, were from Tindal's version, the remainder from Coverdale's.

then, being orderly called, having both a conscience, and a ready good will to help forward the work of the Lord in his native country, left such honest and certain conditions as he had in Saxony, and came into England to preach the gospel, without certainty of any condition. In which office, after he had a space diligently and faithfully travailed, Nicholas Ridley, then bishop of London, gave him a prebend in the cathedral church of St. Paul; and the dean and chapter chose him to be the reader of the divinity lecture there, wherein he diligently travailed, until such time as queen Mary, obtaining the crown, banished the gospel and true religion, and brought in the antichrist of Rome, with his idolatry and superstition.

After the queen was come to the tower of London, (August 3d, 1553,) Rogers, being orderly called thereunto, made a godly and vehement sermon at Paul's cross, confirming such true doctrine as he and others had there taught in king Edward's days, exhorting the people constantly to remain in the same, and to beware of all pestilent popery, idolatry, and superstition. The council being then overmatched with popish and bloody bishops, called him to account for his sermon. To whom he made a stout, wise, and godly answer, and yet so conducted himself that at that time he was clearly dismissed. But after that proclamation was set forth by the queen to prohibit true preaching, (August 18th,) he was called again before the council; for the bishops thirsted after his blood. The council quarrelled with him concerning his doctrine, and in conclusion commanded him to keep his own house as prisoner,* and so he did; although by flying he might easily have escaped their cruel hands, and many things there were which might have moved him thereunto. He saw that the recovery of religion in England at that time seemed to be desperate; he knew he could not want a living in Germany, and he could not forget his wife and ten children, and wished to seek means to succour them. But all these things set apart, after he was called to answer in Christ's cause, he would not depart from the realm, but stoutly

* From the state papers of William Cecil, lord Burghley, it appears that Rogers was confined to his house rather earlier; he says, "August 16th, John Rogers, alias Mathew, a seditious preacher, was ordered by the lords of the council to keep himself as prisoner in his house at Paul's, without conference with any person, other than such as are daily with him in household, until such time as he hath contrary commandment."

stood in defence of the same, and for the trial of that truth was content to hazard his life.

In April, 1554, there was an intention to send Rogers, and some other protestant divines to Cambridge, to be there disputed with, as Cranmer and others had been "baited" at Oxford; but he and others signed a declaration, that they would not dispute, excepting before the queen and parliament, or a fair hearing and opportunity to speak their minds were allowed them.

Thus he remained in his own house as prisoner a long time, till at the length, through the uncharitable procurement of Bonner, bishop of London, who could not abide such honest neighbours to dwell by him, he was removed from his own house to the prison called Newgate, where he was lodged among thieves and murderers, for a great space; during which time, what business he had with the adversaries of Christ, is not all known; neither yet is there any certainty of his examinations, further than he himself did leave in writing, which God would not to be lost, but to remain for a perpetual testimony in the cause of God's truth, as here follows, recorded and testified by his own writing.

The examination and answer of John Rogers, made to the lord chancellor, and to the rest of the council, the 22nd of January, 1555; penned by himself.

The Lord Chancellor (*bishop Gardiner*). First, the lord chancellor said unto me thus; Sir, ye have heard of the state of the realm in which it standeth now.

Rogers. No, my lord, I have been kept in close prison, and except there have been some general things said at the table, when I was at dinner or supper, I have heard nothing; and there have I heard nothing whereupon any special thing might be grounded.

L. C. Then said the lord chancellor, General things, general things, mockingly; Ye have heard of my lord cardinal's coming, and that the parliament hath received his blessing, not one resisting unto it, but one man who did speak against it.* Such a unity, and such a miracle

* Cardinal Pole arrived in England in the November preceding, as legate from the pope. The king and queen, and all the members of both houses of parliament, kneeled down before him to entreat pardon and absolution for the kingdom. There was only one exception, Sir Ralph Bagnal, who refused to consent to this submission, others were of the same mind, but had not courage to speak out. See *Strype*.

has not been seen. One that was by, whose name I know not, said, And all they, of whom there are eight score in one house, have with one assent and consent received pardon of their offences, for the schism that we had in England, in refusing the holy father of Rome to be head of the catholic church. How say ye, are ye content to unite, and knit yourself to the faith of the catholic church, with us, in the state in which it is now in England: will ye do that?

R. The catholic church I never did nor will dissent from.

L. C. Nay; but I speak of the state of the catholic church in that wise in which we stand now in England, having received the pope to be supreme head.

R. I know none other head but Christ of his catholic church, neither will I acknowledge the bishop of Rome to have any more authority than any other bishop hath, by the word of God, and by the doctrine of the old and pure catholic church four hundred years after Christ.

L. C. Why didst thou then acknowledge king Henry the eighth to be supreme head of the church, if Christ be the only head?

R. I never granted him to have any supremacy in spiritual things, as the forgiveness of sins, giving of the Holy Ghost, and authority to be a judge above the word of God.

L. C. Yea, said he, and Tonstal bishop of Durham, and the bishop of Worcester.—If thou hadst said so in his days, (and they nodded the head at me with laughter,) thou hadst not been alive now.

I denied, and would have told how he was said and meant to be supreme head. But they looked and laughed one upon another, and made such a business, that I was constrained to let it pass. There lies also no great weight thereupon; for all the world knows what the meaning was. The lord chancellor also said to the lord William Howard, that there was no inconvenience therein, to have Christ to be supreme head and the bishop of Rome also; and when I was ready to have answered that there could not be two heads of one church, and to have more plainly declared the vanity of that his reason, the lord chancellor said, What sayest thou? Make us a direct answer whether thou wilt be one of this catholic church, or not, with us, in that state in which we now are.

R. My lord, without fail I cannot believe that ye yourselves do think in your hearts that he is supreme head in

forgiving of sin, &c. Seeing you and all the bishops of the realm have now twenty years long preached, and some of you also written to the contrary, and the parliament has so long ago consented unto it. And there he interrupted me thus.

L. C. Tush, that parliament was with most great cruelty constrained to abolish and put away the primacy from the bishop of Rome.

R. With cruelty! Why then I perceive that you take a wrong way with cruelty to persuade men's consciences. For it should appear by your doings now, that the cruelty then used has not persuaded your consciences. How would you then have our consciences persuaded with cruelty?

L. C. I talk to thee of no cruelty—but that they were so often and so cruelly called upon in that parliament to let the act go forward; yea, and even with force driven thereunto; whereas in this parliament it was so uniformly received, as is aforesaid.

Here my lord Paget told me more plainly, what my lord chancellor meant. Unto whom I answered:

R. My lord, what will you conclude thereby? that the first parliament was of less authority, because but few consented unto it: and this last parliament of greater authority, because more consented unto it? It goes not, my lord, by the more or lesser part, but by the wiser, truer, and godlier part.—And I would have said more, but the lord chancellor interrupted me with his question, willing me once again to answer him. "For," said he, "we have more to speak with than thou, who must come in after thee."—And so indeed there were ten persons more out of Newgate, besides two that were not called. Of which ten, one was a citizen of London, who yielded unto them, and nine were contrary; all of whom came to prison again, and refused the cardinal's blessing, and the authority of his holy father's church, saving that one of these nine was not asked the question, otherwise than thus, Whether he would be an honest man, as his father was before him? and he answered, Yea; so he was discharged by the friendship of my lord William Howard, as I have understood. He bade me tell him what I would do; whether I would enter into the one church with the whole realm as it is now, or not? No, said I, I will first see it proved by the scriptures. Let me have pen, ink, books, &c. and I will take upon me plainly to set out the matter, so

that the contrary shall be proved to be true; and let any man that will, confer with me by writing.

L. C. Nay, that shall not be permitted thee. Thou shalt never have so much proffered thee as thou hast now, if thou refuse it, and wilt not now consent and agree to the catholic church. Here are two things, mercy and justice: if thou refuse the queen's mercy now, then shalt thou have justice ministered unto thee.

R. I never offended, nor was disobedient unto her grace, and yet I will not refuse her mercy. But if this shall be denied me, to confer by writing, and to try out the truth, then it is not well, but too far out of the way. Ye yourselves, all the bishops of the realm, brought me to abjure the pretended primacy of the bishop of Rome, when I was a young man, twenty years past; and will ye now, without collation, have me to say and do the contrary? I cannot be so persuaded.

L. C. If thou wilt not receive the bishop of Rome to be supreme head of the catholic church, then thou shalt never have her mercy, thou mayest be sure. And as touching conferring and trial, I am forbidden by the scriptures to use any conferring and trial with thee. For St. Paul teaches me, that I should shun and eschew a heretic after one or two monitions, knowing that such a one is overthrown and is faulty, insomuch as he is condemned by his own judgment.

R. My lord, I deny that I am a heretic; prove ye that first, and then allege the aforesaid text.—But still the lord chancellor played on one string, saying,

L. C. If thou wilt enter into one church with us, &c. tell us that, or else thou shalt never have so much proffered thee again, as thou hast now.

R. I will find it first in the scripture, and see it tried thereby, before I receive him to be supreme head.

Worcester. Why, do ye not know what is in your creed, I believe the holy catholic church?

R. I find not the bishop of Rome there. For "catholic" signifies not the Romish church; it signifies the consent of all true teaching churches of all times, and of all ages. But how should the bishop of Rome's church be one of them, which teaches so many doctrines that are plainly and directly against the word of God? Can that bishop be the true head of the catholic church that does so? That is not possible.

L. C. Show me one of them; one; let me hear one.

I remembered myself, that among so many I were best to show one, and said, I will show you one.

L. C. Let me hear that, let me hear that.

R. The bishop of Rome and his church say, read, and sing all that they do in their congregations in Latin, which is directly and plainly against the first to the Corinthians, the fourteenth chapter.

L. C. I deny that, I deny that that is against the word of God. Let me see you prove that; how prove you that?

Then I began to say the text from the beginning of the chapter; To speak with tongues, said I, is to speak with a strange tongue, as Latin or Greek, &c. and so to speak is not to speak unto men, but unto God (meaning God only at the most). But ye speak in Latin, which is a strange tongue, wherefore ye speak not unto men, but unto God. This be granted, that they speak not unto men, but unto God.

L. C. Well, then, is it vain unto men?

R. No, not in vain. For one man speaketh in one tongue, and another in another tongue, and all well.

L. C. Nay, I will prove then that he speaks neither unto God nor unto man, but unto the wind.

I was willing to have declared how these two texts do agree, for they must agree, they both are the sayings of the Holy Ghost, spoken by the apostle Paul, as, To speak not to men, but unto God, and To speak unto the wind: and so I would have gone forward with the proof of my matter begun, but here arose a noise and a confusion. Then said the lord chancellor,

L. C. To speak unto God, and not unto God, were impossible.

R. I will prove them possible.

Nay, saith my lord William Howard to my lord chancellor, now will I bear you witness that he is out of the way. For he grants first, that they which speak in a strange speech speak unto God; and now he saith the contrary, that they speak neither to God nor to man.

R. (*turning to my lord Howard.*) I have not granted or said as you report. I have alleged the one text, and now I am come to the other; they must agree, and I can make them to agree. But as for you, you understand not the matter.

L. H. I understand so much, that it is not possible.

This is a point of sophistry, quoth secretary Bourn.

Then the lord chancellor began to tell the lord Howard, that when he was in Germany, they at Halle, which had before prayed and used their service in German, began then to turn part into Latin, and part into German.

W. Yea, and at Wittemberg too.

R. Yea, *(but I could not be heard for their noise,)* in a university, where men for the most part understood the Latin—and yet not all in Latin. And I would have told the order, and have gone forward both to have answered my lord, and to have proved the thing that I had taken in hand ; but perceiving their talk and noise to be too noisome, I was fain to think this in my heart, suffering them in the mean while to talk one of them one thing, and another another. Alas ! neither will these men hear me if I speak, neither yet will they suffer me to write. There is no remedy, but let them alone, and commit the matter to God. Yet I began to go forward, and said, that I would make the texts to agree, and to prove my purpose well enough.

L. C. No, no, thou canst prove nothing by the scripture. The scripture is dead ; it must have a lively expositor.

R. No, the scripture is alive. But let me go forward with my purpose.

W. All heretics have alleged the scriptures for them, and therefore we must have a lively expositor for them.

R. Yea, all heretics have alleged the scriptures for them ; but they were confuted by the scriptures, and by no other expositor.

W. But they would not confess that they were overcome by the scriptures, I am sure of that.

R. I believe that : and yet were they overcome by them, and in all the councils they were disputed with and overthrown by the scriptures. And here I would have declared how they ought to proceed in these days, and so have come again to my purpose, but it was impossible ; for one asked one thing, another said another, so that I was fain to hold my peace, and let them talk. And even when I would have taken hold of my proof, the lord chancellor bade to prison with me again ; and, Away, away, said he, we have more to talk withal : if I would not be reformed, so he termed it, away, away. Then up I stood, for I had kneeled all the while.

Then sir Richard Southwell, who stood by in a window,

said to me, Thou wilt not burn in this gear when it comes to the purpose, I know well that.

R. Sir, I cannot tell, but I trust to my Lord God, yes—lifting up mine eyes unto heaven.

Then my lord of Ely told me much of the queen's majesty's pleasure and meaning, and set it out with large words, saying, that she took them that would not receive the bishop of Rome's supremacy, to be unworthy to have her mercy, &c.

I said I would not refuse her mercy, and yet I never offended her in all my life; and that I besought her grace and all their honours to be good to me, reserving my conscience.

Several spake at once. No? said they then, (a great sort of them, and specially secretary Bourn,) a married priest, and have not offended the law?

I said, I had not broken the queen's law, nor yet any point of the law of the realm therein, for I married where it was lawful.

Several at once, Where was that? said they; thinking that to be unlawful in all places.

R. In Germany. And if ye had not here in England made an open law that priests might have had wives, I would never have come home again; for I brought a wife and eight children with me; which ye might be sure that I would not have done, if the laws of the realm had not permitted it before.

Then there was a great noise, some saying, that I was come too soon with such a sort; that I should find a sour coming of it; and some one thing and some another: and one, I could not well perceive who, said, that there was never a catholic man or country, that ever granted that a priest might have a wife.

I said that, the catholic church never denied marriage to priests, nor yet to any other man; and therewith was I going out of the chamber, the sergeant who brought me thither having me by the arm.

Then the bishop of Worcester turned his face towards me, and said that I wist not where that church was or is.

I said, yes, that I could tell where it was—but therewith went the sergeant with me out of the door.

This was the very true effect of all that was spoken unto me, and of all that I answered thereunto.

And here would I gladly make a more perfect answer to

all the former objections, as also a due proof of that which I had taken in hand; but at this present I was informed that I should to-morrow come to further answer. Wherefore I am compelled to leave out that which I would most gladly have done, desiring here the hearty and unfeigned help of the prayers of all Christ's true members, the true sons of the unfeigned catholic church, that the Lord God of all consolation will now be my comfort, aid, strength, buckler, and shield; as also of all my brethren that are in the same case and distress, that I and they all may despise all manner of threats and cruelty, and even the bitter burning fire, and the dreadful dart of death, and stick like true soldiers to our dear and loving Captain, Christ, our only Redeemer and Saviour, and also the true Head of the church; that doeth all in us all, which is the very property of a head, and is a thing that all the bishops of Rome cannot do, and that we do not traitorously run out of his tents, or rather out of the plain field from him, into the most jeopardy of the battle; but that we may persevere in the fight, if he will not otherwise deliver us, till we be most cruelly slain of his enemies. For this I most heartily, and at this present with weeping tears, most instantly and earnestly desire, and beseech you all to pray; and also, if I die, to be good to my poor and most honest wife, being a poor stranger, and all my little souls, hers and my children; whom with all the whole faithful and true catholic congregation of Christ, the Lord of life and death, save, keep, and defend in all the troubles and assaults of this vain world, and bring at the last to everlasting salvation, the true and sure inheritance of all crossed christians. Amen. Amen.

The 27th day of January at night.

JOHN ROGERS.

The second confession of John Rogers, made, and that should have been made, if I might have been heard, the 28th and 29th days of January, 1555.

First, Being asked again by the lord chancellor, whether I would come into one church with the bishops and whole realm, as now was concluded by parliament, in the which all the realm was converted to the catholic church of Rome, and so receive the mercy before proffered me, arising again with the whole realm out of the schism and

error in which we had long been, with recantation of my errors—I answered, that before I could not tell what his mercy meant, but now I understood that it was a mercy of the antichristian church of Rome, which I utterly refused, and that the rising, which he spake of, was a very fall into error, and false doctrine. Also that I had, and would be able, by God's grace, to prove that all the doctrine which I had ever taught was true and catholic, and that by the scriptures, and the authority of the fathers who lived four hundred years after Christ's death. He answered, that should not, might not, and ought not to be granted me; for I was but a private man, and might not be heard against the determination of the whole realm. Should, quoth he, when a parliament hath concluded a thing, one or any private person have authority to discuss, whether they have done right or wrong? No, that may not be.

I answered shortly, that all the laws of men might not, neither could rule the word of God; but that they all must be discussed and judged thereby, and obey thereunto; and neither my conscience, nor any christian man's, could be satisfied with such laws as disagreed from that word. And so was willing to have said much more, but the lord chancellor began a long tale to very small purpose, concerning mine answer, to have debased me, that there was nothing in me wherefore I should be heard, but arrogancy, pride, and vain-glory. I also granted mine ignorance to be greater than I could express, or than he took it; but yet that I feared not, by God's assistance and strength, to be able by writing to perform my word; neither was I, I thanked God, so utterly ignorant as he would make me, but all was of God, to whom be thanks rendered therefore; proud man was I never, nor yet vain-glorious. All the world knew well, where and on what side, pride, arrogancy, and vain-glory was. It was a poor pride that was or is in us, God knoweth it.

Then he said, that I at the first dash condemned the queen and the whole realm to be of the church of antichrist, and he burdened me highly therewithal. I answered, that the queen's majesty, God save her grace, would have done well enough, if it had not been for his counsel. He said, the queen went before him, and it was her own motion. I said without fail, I neither could, nor would I ever believe it.*

* There afterwards appeared but too much probability of the truth of this assertion of Gardiner.

Then said doctor Aldrich, the bishop of Carlisle, that they the bishops would bear them witness. Yea, quoth I, that I believe well; and with that the people laughed: for that day there were many, but on the morrow they kept the doors shut, and would let none in but the bishops' adherents, and servants in a manner, yea, and the first day the thousandth man came not in. Then master Comptroller and secretary Bourn would have stood up also to bear witness and did so.

I said it was no great matter; and to say the truth, I thought that they were good helpers thereto themselves; but I ceased to say any more therein, knowing that they were too strong and mighty of power, and that they would be believed before me, yea, and before our Saviour Christ, and all his prophets, and apostles too, in these days.

Then after many words he asked me what I thought concerning the blessed sacrament, and stood up, and put off his cap, and all his fellow-bishops, of which there were a great sort, new men, of whom I knew few, whether I believed the sacrament to be the very body and blood of our Saviour Christ, that was born of the virgin Mary, and hanged on the cross, really and substantially.

I answered, I had often told him that it was a matter in which I was no meddler, and therefore was suspected of my brethren to be of a contrary opinion. Notwithstanding, even as the most part of your doctrine in other parts is false, and the defence thereof only by force and cruelty: so in this matter I think it to be as false as the rest. For I cannot understand, "really and substantially," to signify otherwise than corporeally; but corporeally Christ is only in heaven, and so cannot Christ be corporeally also in your sacrament. And here I somewhat set out his charity after this sort. My lord, quoth I, ye have dealt with me most cruelly; for ye have put me in prison without law, and kept me there now almost a year and a half; for I was almost half a year in my house, where I was obedient to you, God knows, and spake with no man. And now have I been a full year in Newgate, at great cost and charges, having a wife and ten children to find, and I had never a penny of my livings; which was against the law.

He answered, that Dr. Ridley, who had given them me, was a usurper, and therefore I was the unjust possessor of them.

Was the king then an usurper, quoth I, who gave Dr. Ridley the bishopric?

Yea, quoth he, and began to set out the wrongs that the king had done to the bishop of London, and to himself also. But yet I do misuse my terms, quoth he, to call the king usurper. But the word was gone out of the abundance of the heart before; and I think that he was not very sorry for it in heart. I might have said more concerning that matter, but I did not.

I asked him wherefore he put me in prison? He said, because I preached against the queen.

I answered, that it was not true; and I would be bound to prove it, and to stand to the trial of the law, that no man should be able to prove it, and thereupon would set my life. I preached, quoth I, a sermon at the cross, after the queen came to the Tower; but therein was nothing said against the queen, I take witness of all the audience, which was not small. I alleged also that he had, after examination, let me go at liberty after the preaching of that sermon.

Yea, but thou didst read thy lectures after, quoth he, against the commandment of the council.

That did I not, quoth I; let that be proved, and let me die for it. Thus have you now against the law of God and man handled me, and never sent for me, never conferred with me, never spoken of any learning, till now that ye have gotten a whip to whip me with, and a sword to cut off my neck, if I will not condescend to your mind. This charity doth all the world understand.*

I might and would have added, if I could have been suffered to speak, that it had been time enough to take away men's livings, and thereto to have imprisoned them, after they had offended the laws: for they are good citizens that break not laws, and worthy of praise and not of punishment. But their purpose is to keep men in prison, until they may catch them in their laws, and so kill them. I could and would have added the example of Daniel, who by a crafty-devised law was cast into the lions' den.

Also, I might have declared, that I most humbly desired to be set at liberty, sending my wife to him (Gardiner)

* Rogers here alludes to the laws against heretics originally enacted in the reigns of Richard II., Henry IV., and Henry V., which had been repealed a few years before, but were revived by an act brought into the house of Commons on the 12th December, 1554, and passed by the Lords on the 18th; immediately after which they began to examine and put to death as heretics, the protestants who had hitherto been detained in prison on various pretences.

with a supplication, being great with child, and with her eight honest women, or thereabout, to Richmond, at Christmas was a twelvemonth, while I was yet in my house.

Also, I wrote two supplications to him out of Newgate, and sent my wife many times to him. Master Gosnold* also, that worthy man, who is now departed in the Lord, laboured for me, and so did divers other worthy men also take pains in the matter. These things declare my lord chancellor's antichristian charity, which is, that he hath and doth seek my blood, and the destruction of my poor wife and my ten children.

This is a short sum of the words which were spoken on the 28th day of January at afternoon, after that master Hooper had been the first, and master Cardmaker† the second, in examination before me. The Lord grant us grace to stand together, fighting lawfully in his cause till we be smitten down together, if the Lord's will be so to permit it: for there shall not a hair of our heads perish against his will, but with his will. Whereunto the Lord grant us to be obedient unto the end, and in the end. Amen. Sweet, mighty, and merciful Lord Jesus, the Son of David and of God. Amen, Amen, let every true christian say and pray.

Then the clock being as I guessed about four, the lord chancellor said that he and the church must yet use charity with me; what manner of charity it is, all true christians do well understand, namely, the same that the fox does with the chickens, and the wolf with the lambs, and he gave me respite till to-morrow, to see whether I would remember myself well to-morrow, and whether I would return to the catholic church, for so he called his antichristian false church again, and repent, and they would receive me to mercy.

I said, that I was never out of the true catholic church, nor would be: but into his church would I by God's grace never come.

Well, quoth he, then is our church false and antichristian? Yes, quoth I.

And what is the doctrine of the sacrament?—False, quoth I; and cast my hands abroad.

Then said one, that I was a player. To whom I answered not; for I passed not upon ‡ his mock.

* Solicitor-general in the reign of Edward VI.

† Cardmaker was a prebendary of Wells; he was burned in Smithfield on the 30th of May following. ‡ Cared not for.

Come again, quoth the lord chancellor, to-morrow, between nine and ten.

I am ready to come again, whensoever ye call, quoth I.

And thus was I brought by the sheriffs to the compter in Southwark, master Hooper going before me, and a great multitude of people being present, so that we had much to do to go in the streets.

Thus much was done the 28th day of January.

The second day, which was the 29th of January, we were sent for in the morning, about nine of the clock, and by the sheriffs fetched from the compter in Southwark to the church again,* where we were the day before in the afternoon. And when master Hooper was condemned, as I understood afterwards, then sent they for me. Then the lord chancellor said unto me:

Rogers, here thou wast yesterday, and we gave thee liberty to remember thyself this night, whether thou wouldest come to the holy catholic church of Christ again, or not. Tell us now, what thou hast determined, whether thou wilt be repentant and sorry, and wilt return again and take mercy.

My lord, quoth I, I have remembered myself right well, what you yesterday said to me, and desire you to give me leave to declare my mind, what I have to say thereunto; and that done, I shall answer you to your demanded question.

When I yesterday desired that I might be suffered by the scriptures and authority of the first, best, and purest church to defend my doctrine by writing, meaning not only of the primacy, but also of all the doctrine that ever I had preached, ye answered me, that it might not, and ought not to be granted me, for I was a private person; and that the parliament was above the authority of all private persons, and therefore the sentence thereof might not be found faulty and valueless by me, being only a private person. And yet, my lord, quoth I, I am able to show examples, that one man hath come into a general council, and after the whole had determined and agreed upon an act or article, some one man coming in afterwards, hath by the word of God, declared so pithily that the council had erred in decreeing the said article, that he caused the whole council to change, and alter their act or article before determined. And of these examples, I am able to show two.

* St. Saviour's, or St. Mary Overy, Southwark.

I can also show the authority of Augustine; that when he disputed with a heretic, he would neither himself, nor yet have the heretic to lean unto the determination of the two former councils, of the which the one made for him, and the other for the heretic that disputed against him; but said that he would have the scriptures to be their judge, which were common and indifferently for them both, and not proper to either of them.

Also, I could show, said I, the authority of a learned lawyer, (Panormitanus,) who saith, that unto a simple layman who brings the word of God with him, there ought more credit to be given, than to a whole council gathered together. By these things will I prove that I ought not to be denied to say my mind, and to be heard against a whole parliament, bringing the word of God for me and the authority of the old church four hundred years after Christ, albeit that every man in the parliament had willingly and without respect of fear and favour agreed thereunto, which I doubt not a little of, especially seeing the like had been permitted in that old church, even in general councils, yea, and that in one of the chiefest councils that ever was, unto which neither any acts of this parliament, nor yet any of the late general councils of the bishops of Rome, ought to be compared. For, said I, if Henry the eighth were alive, and should call a parliament, and begin to determine a thing, (and here I would have alleged the example of the act of making the queen a bastard, and of making himself the superior head; but I could not, being interrupted by one whom God forgive,*) then will ye, *(pointing to my lord chancellor,)* and ye, and ye, and so ye all, *(pointing to the rest of the bishops,)* say Amen; yea, and if it like your grace, it is meet that it be so enacted.

Here my lord chancellor would suffer me to speak no more, but bade me sit down, mockingly saying, that I was sent for to be instructed of them, and I would take upon me to be their instructor.

My lord, quoth I, I stand and sit not—shall I not be suffered to speak for my life?

Shall we suffer thee to tell a tale, and to prate? quoth he.—And with that he stood up, and began to face me, after his old arrogant proud fashion; for he perceived that I was in a way to have touched them somewhat, which

* Sir Anthony Brown.

he thought to hinder by dashing me out of my tale, and so he did. For I could never be suffered to come to my tale again, no, not to one word of it; but he had much like communication with me, as he had the day before, and as his manner is, taunt upon taunt, and check upon check. For in that case, being God's cause, I told him he should not make me afraid to speak.

See, what a spirit this fellow hath, said he; finding fault at mine accustomed earnestness, and hearty manner of speaking.

I have a true spirit, quoth I, agreeing and obeying the word of God; and would further have said, that I was never the worse, but the better, to be earnest in a just and true cause, and in my Master Christ's matters; but I could not be heard.

And at the length he proceeded towards his excommunication and condemnation, after that I had told him that his church of Rome was the church of antichrist, meaning the false doctrine and tyrannical laws, with the maintenance thereof by cruel persecutions used by the bishops of the said church, of which the bishop of Winchester and the rest of his fellow-bishops that are now in England are the chief members: of the laws I mean, quoth I, and not all the men and women which are in the pope's church.

Likewise, when I was said to have denied their sacrament, whereof he made his wonted reverent mention, more to maintain his kingdom thereby, than for the true reverence of Christ's institution; more for his own and his popish generation's sake, than for religion or God's sake— I told him after what order I did speak of it; for the manner of his speaking was not agreeing to my words, which are before recited in the communication that we had on the 28th of January, wherewith he was not contented, but he asked the audience whether I had not simply denied the sacrament. They would have said and done what he listed, for the most of them were of his own servants at that day; the 29th of January I mean. At the last I said, I will never deny what I said, which is, That your doctrine of the sacrament is false; but yet I tell you after what order I said it.

To be short, he read my condemnation before me, particularly mentioning therein but two articles; first, that I affirmed the Romish catholic church to be the church of antichrist; and that I denied the reality of their sacraments.

He caused me to be degraded and condemned, and put into the hands of the laity, and so he gave me over into the sheriffs' hands, which were much better than his.

The copy of this condemnation here I thought good to put down in English, to the intent that the same, being here once expressed, may serve for all other sentences condemnatory through the whole history to be referred unto. (*Fox.*)

The sentence condemnatory against master Rogers.

In the name of God, Amen. We, Stephen, by the permission of God, bishop of Winchester, lawfully and rightly proceeding, with all godly favour, by authority and virtue of our office, against thee, John Rogers, priest, alias called Mathew, before us personally here present, being accused and detected, and notoriously slandered of heresy; having heard, seen, and understood, and with all diligent deliberation, weighed, discussed, and considered the merits of the cause, all things being observed, which by us in this behalf in order of law ought to be observed, sitting in our judgment-seat, the name of Christ being first called upon, and having God only before our eyes. Because, by the acts enacted, propounded, and exhibited in this matter, and by thine own confession, judicially made before us, we do find that thou hast taught, holden, and affirmed, and obstinately defended, divers errors, heresies, and damnable opinions, contrary to the doctrine and determination of the holy church; as, namely, these, that the catholic church of Rome is the church of antichrist; also, that in the sacrament of the altar there is not, substantially nor really, the natural body and blood of Christ. The which aforesaid heresies and damnable opinions, being contrary to the law of God, and the determination of the universal and apostolical church, thou hast arrogantly, stubbornly, and wittingly, maintained, held, and affirmed, and also defended before us, as well in this judgment, as also otherwise; and with the like obstinacy, stubbornness, malice, and blindness of heart, both wittingly and willingly, hast affirmed that thou wilt believe, maintain, and hold, affirm, and declare the same. We, therefore, Stephen Winchester, bishop, ordinary, and diocesan aforesaid, by the consent and assent, as well of our reverend brethren, the lords

bishops here present and assistant, as also by the counsel and judgment of divers worshipful lawyers and professors of divinity, with whom we have communicated in this behalf, do declare and pronounce thee the said John Rogers, otherwise called Mathew, through thy demerits, transgressions, and obstinacies and wilfulness, which thy manifold ways hast incurred by thy own wicked and stubborn obstinacy, to have been and to be guilty of the detestable, horrible, and wicked offence of heretical pravity and execrable doctrine; and that thou hast before us, sundry times spoken, maintained, and wittingly and stubbornly defended the said cursed and execrable doctrine in thy sundry confessions, assertions, and recognitions, here judicially before us oftentimes repeated, and yet dost still maintain, affirm, and believe the same, and that thou hast been, and art, lawfully and ordinarily convicted in this behalf. We therefore, I say, albeit, following the example of Christ, which would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should convert and live, we have gone about oftentimes to correct thee, and by all lawful means that we could, and all wholesome admonitions that we did know, to reduce thee again unto the true faith and unity of the universal catholic church, notwithstanding have found thee obstinate and stiff-necked, willingly continuing in thy damnable opinions and heresies, and refusing to return again unto the true faith and unity of the holy mother church; and as the child of wickedness and darkness thou hast so hardened thy heart, that thou wilt not understand the voice of thy shepherd, which with a fatherly affection doth seek after thee, nor will be allured with his fatherly and godly admonitions.—We, therefore, Stephen, the bishop aforesaid, not willing that thou, which art wicked, shouldst now become more wicked, and infect the Lord's flock with thy heresy, which we are greatly afraid of, with sorrow of mind and bitterness of heart do judge thee, and definitively condemn thee, the said John Rogers, otherwise called Mathew, thy demerits and defaults being aggravated through thy damnable obstinacy, as guilty of most detestable heresies, and as an obstinate impenitent sinner, refusing penitently to return to the lap and unity of the holy mother church, and that thou hast been and art by law excommunicate, and do pronounce and declare thee to be an excommunicated person. Also we pronounce and declare thee, being a heretic, to be cast out from the

church, and left unto the judgment of the secular power, and now presently do leave thee as an obstinate heretic, and a person wrapped in the sentence of the great curse, to be degraded worthily for thy demerits, (requiring them, notwithstanding, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that this execution and punishment worthily to be done upon thee, may so be moderated, that the rigour thereof be not too extreme, nor yet the gentleness too much mitigated, but that it may be to the salvation of thy soul, to the extirpation, terror, and conversion of the heretics, to the unity of the catholic faith,*) by this our sentence definitive, which we here lay upon and against thee, and do with sorrow of heart promulgate in this form aforesaid.

After this sentence being read, he sent us, master Hooper, I mean, and me, to the Clink, there to remain till night; and when it was dark they carried us, master Hooper going before with the one sheriff, and I coming after with the other, with bills and weapons enough, out of the Clink, and led us through the bishop's house, and so through St. Mary's churchyard, and so into Southwark, and over the bridge, in procession to Newgate, through the city. But I must show you this also, that when he had read the condemnation, he declared that I was in the great curse, and what a vengeable † dangerous matter it was to eat and drink with us that were accursed, or to give us any thing; for all that did so, should be partakers of the same great curse.

Well, my lord, quoth I, here I stand before God and you, and all this honourable audience, and take him to witness, that I never wittingly or willingly taught any false doctrine; and therefore have I a good conscience before God and all good men. I am sure that you and I shall come before a Judge that is righteous, before whom I shall be as good a man as you; and I nothing doubt but that I shall be found there a true member of the true catholic church of Christ, and everlastingly saved. And as for your false church, you need not excommunicate me forth of it. I have not been in it these twenty years, the Lord be thanked

* This clause was always inserted in the condemnation of the professors of the truth, by the Romish ecclesiastics, although they well knew that the only course which the civil authorities dared to follow, was to burn those so recommended to their mercy.

† Deserving of punishment.

therefore! But now ye have done what you can, my lord, I pray you yet grant me one thing.

What is that? quoth he.

That my poor wife, being a stranger, may come and speak with me so long as I live. For she hath ten children that are hers and mine; and somewhat I would counsel her what were best for her to do.

No, quoth he; she is not thy wife.

Yes, my lord, quoth I, and hath been these eighteen years.

Should I grant her to be thy wife? quoth he.

Choose you, quoth I, whether you will or not, she shall be so, nevertheless.

She shall not come at thee, quoth he.

Then I have tried out all your charity, said I. You make yourself highly displeased with the matrimony of priests, but you maintain open whoredom, as in Wales, quoth I, where every priest hath his harlot openly dwelling with him; and even as your holy father suffereth all the priests in Germany and in France to do the like. Thereto he answered not, but looked, as it were, a-squint at it; and thus I departed, and saw him for the last time.

Other good matter there is besides, penned by master Rogers in the prison, which he thought he would have answered, if he might have been permitted; which matter here follows, as set down by himself.

Hitherto, dearly beloved, ye have heard what was said; now hear what I proposed the night before to have said, if I could have been permitted. Two things I purposed to have touched. The one, how it was lawful for a private man to reason and write against a wicked act of parliament, or ungodly council, which the lord chancellor the day before denied me. The other was, to prove that prosperity was not always a token of God's love.

And this I purpose to speak of, because the lord chancellor boasted of himself, that he was delivered forth of prison, as it were by miracle, and preserved of God, to restore true religion, and to punish me and such others, whom he termed heretics. Concerning these two points, in this matter I purposed to have proceeded thus. It is not unknown to you that king Henry the eighth, in his

time, made his daughter, the queen that now is, a bastard; he abolished the authority of the bishop of Rome: he pulled down abbeys: and all this he did by the consent of parliament.

King Edward the sixth, in his time, made lawful the marriage of priests, turned the service into English, abolished the idolatrous mass, with all like superstitious trumpery, set up the holy communion, and all by consent of parliament.

The queen that now is, hath repealed the act that made her a bastard; hath brought in the bishop of Rome, and set him in his old authority; begins to set up abbeys again; hath made the marriage of priests unlawful; hath turned the English service into Latin again; hath set up the mass again, with like baggage, and pulled down the holy communion; and all this is done by consent of parliament.

If the acts of parliament made in king Henry's time, and king Edward's, had their foundation upon God's word, whereupon all positive law ought to be grounded; then these which are established in the queen's time, being wholly contrary to the others, as they are not warranted by God's word, so are they wicked, and therefore to be both spoken and written against of all men, as well of private as of public persons.

If your acts, my lord chancellor, which you have lately coined, (I call them yours, because you only bear the swing, and devise and decree what ye list, all other men are forced to follow,) be good, and according to God's word, then the former acts were naught, which ye seemed to say, in utterly taking them away, and setting up the contrary. If the former were naught, why then did ye consent unto them, and confirm them to be good by your voluntary and advised writing, as it appears, and will do to the world's end, in your book, De vera obedientia, where you prove the queen a bastard, and the bishop of Rome to be an usurper, and to have no authority in the realm of England.

Ye must needs confess, that the most part of your acts of parliament, in these latter days, have been according to the fantasies of a few. King Henry, in his time, established by parliament, in a manner, what he listed, and many things that might well have been amended.

In king Edward's days, the dukes of Somerset and Northumberland bare a great stroke in things, and did not all things sincerely. Even so, since the queen, that

now is, came to the government of the realm, all things are ordered by your device and head, and the whole parliament-house is led as you list; by reason whereof they are compelled to consent to things both contrary to God's manifest word, and also contrary to their own consciences, so great is your cruelty.

For to bring your wicked purposes to pass, and to establish your antichristian kingdom, which, I trust, the Lord with the breath of his mouth will speedily blow over, you have called three parliaments in one year and a half, that, what you could not compass by subtle persuasion, you might bring to pass by tyrannical threatening. For if you had not used cruel force in your doings, you had never brought to pass such things as this day you have, to the utter defacing and abolishing of God's true religion, and to the casting away and destruction of your natural country, so much as in you lieth.

And as it is most true that acts of parliament have, in these latter days, been ruled by the fantasies of a few, and the whole parliament-house, contrary to their minds, was compelled to consent to such things as a few have conceived: so it must needs be granted that the papists at all times were most ready to apply themselves to the present world; and, like men-pleasers, to follow the fantasies of such as were in authority, and turn with the state, whichsoever way it turned. Yea, if the state should change ten times in a year, they would be ever ready at hand to change with it, and to follow the cry, and rather utterly forsake God, and be of no religion, than that they would forego lust and living, for God or religion.

King Henry, by parliament, according to God's word, put down the pope; the clergy consented, and all men openly, by oath, refused his usurped supremacy, knowing, by God's word, Christ to be head of the church, and every king in his realm to have, under and next unto Christ, the chief sovereignty.

King Edward, also, by parliament, according to God's word, set the marriage of priests at liberty, abolished the popish and idolatrous mass, changed the Latin service, and set up the holy communion; the whole clergy consented hereunto; many of them set it forth by their preaching, and all they by practising confirmed the same.

Notwithstanding, now, when the state is altered, and the laws changed, the papistical clergy, with other like

worldlings, as men neither fearing God, nor flying worldly shame, neither yet regarding their consciences, oaths, or honesty, like wavering weather-cocks, turn round about, and putting on harlots' foreheads, sing a new song, and cry with an impudent mouth, Come again, come again to the catholic church—meaning the antichristian church of Rome, which is the synagogue of Satan, and the very sink of all superstition, heresy, and idolatry.

Of what force, I pray you, may a man think these parliaments to be, which scarcely can stand a year in strength? or what credit is to be given to these law-makers, who are not ashamed to establish contrary laws, and to condemn that for evil, which before, (the thing itself and the circumstances remaining all one,) they affirmed and decreed to be good? Truly ye are so ready, contrary to all right, to change and turn for the pleasure of man, that at length, I fear, God will use you like changelings, and both turn you forth of his kingdom, and out of your own country.

Ye charge the gospel preachers with the undoing of this realm; nay, it is the turning papists, which have not only set to sale their country like traitors, but also troubled the simple people, so that they cannot tell what they may believe. For that which they affirmed and preached to be true doctrine in king Edward's days, now they cry against it, as if it were most abominable heresy. This fault I trust shall never find at our hands.

Therefore, to conclude that which I proposed, forasmuch as the acts of parliament of these latter times are one contrary to another, and those which ye now have established in your time, are contrary to God's most manifest word; as is the usurped supremacy of the bishop of Rome, the idolatrous mass, the Latin service, the prohibiting of lawful marriage, (which St. Paul calleth the doctrine of devils,) with many such others: I say, it is not only lawful for any private man, who brings God's word for him, and the authority of the primitive church, to speak and write against such unlawful laws, but it is his duty, and he is bound in very conscience to do it. Which I have proved by divers examples before, and now will add but one other, which is written in the fifth of Acts, where it appeareth that the high priests, the elders, scribes, and pharisees, decreed in their council, and gave the same commandment to the apostles, that they should not preach in the name of Christ, as ye have also forbidden us; notwithstanding, when they

were charged therewithal, they answered, We ought more to obey God than man ; even so we may and do answer you, God is more to be obeyed than man ; and your wicked laws cannot so tongue-tie us, but we will speak the truth.

The apostles were beaten for their boldness, and they rejoiced that they suffered for Christ's cause. Ye have also provided rods for us, and bloody whips, yet when ye have done that which God's hand and counsel hath determined that ye shall do, be it life or death, I trust that God will so assist us by his Holy Spirit and grace, that we shall patiently suffer it, and praise God for it ; and whatsoever become of me and others, who now suffer for speaking and professing of the truth, yet be ye sure, that God's word will prevail and have the upper hand, when your bloody laws, and wicked decrees, for want of sure foundation, shall fall in the dust. And that which I have spoken of your acts of parliament, the same may be said of the general councils of these latter days, which have been within these five hundred years, where the antichrist of Rome, by reason of his usurped authority, ruled the roast, and decreed such things as made for his gain, not regarding God's glory ; and therefore are they to be spoken, written, and cried out against, by all such as fear God and love his truth. And thus much I purposed to have said concerning the first point.

Now touching the second point: That whereas my lord chancellor had, the day before, said his pleasure of them that ruled the realm while he was in prison ; and also rejoiced, as though God had made this alteration even for his sake, and his catholic church, as he called it ; and to declare, as it were by miracle, that we were before in a schism and heresy ; and the realm was now brought unto an unity, and to a truth, and I cannot tell whereto—thereto was I fully purposed to have said, Secondly, My lord, whereas yesterday you so highly dispraised the government of them that ruled in innocent king Edward's days, it may please your lordship to understand, that we poor preachers, whom you so evil allow, did most boldly and plainly rebuke their evil governance in many things, especially their covetousness, and negligence, and small regard to live after the gospel, as also their neglect to occasion others to live thereafter, with more things than I can now rehearse. This all London can testify with us.

I would also have told him what I myself, for my part, did once at Paul's cross, concerning the misuse of abbeys, and other church goods; and I am assured right well, that never a papist of them all did ever so much therein as I did, I thank the Lord therefore. I was also, as it is well known, fain to answer therefore before all the council; and many of my brethren did the like, so that we, for the not rebuking of their faults, shall not answer before God, nor be blameworthy before men. Therefore, let the gentlemen and courtiers themselves, and all the citizens of London, testify what we did.

But, my lord, you could not abide them, for that which they did unto you, and for that they were of a contrary religion unto you. Wherefore, in that you seem so infest* against them, it is neither any just nor public cause, but it is your own private hate, that makes you to report so evil of their governance. And you may now say what you list of them, when they are partly dead and gone, and partly by you put out of office.

But what shall be said of you, when your fall shall follow, you then shall hear. And I must say my conscience to you—I fear me, you have, and will, with your governance, "bring England out of God's blessing into a warm sun." I pray God you do not.

I am an Englishman born, and, God knows, do naturally wish well to my country. And, my lord, I have often proved that the things which I have much feared beforehand should come to pass, have indeed followed. I pray God I may fail of my guessing in this behalf; but truly that will not be with expelling the true word of God out of the realm, and with the shedding of innocent blood.

And, as touching your rejoicing, as though God had set you aloft to punish us by miracle, (for so you report and brag openly of yourself,) and to minister justice, if we will not receive your holy father's mercies, and thereby declare your church to be true, and ours false—to that I answer thus: God's works are wonderful, and are not to be comprehended and perceived by man's wisdom, nor by the wit of the most wise and prudent. Yea, they are soonest deceived, and do most easily judge amiss of God's wonderful works, that are most worldly wise. God hath made all the wisdom of this world foolishness. (1 Cor. i.) He hath put his beloved and dear heart into the hands of the

* Angry, displeased.

enemies thereof. (Jer. xii.) This God doth, which all wise men account to be the most foolish and unwise part that can be. Will the wise of the world, think ye, put their most dear friends and tenderly beloved children into their enemies' hands, to kill, slay, burn, &c.? That is unto them a madness above all madness. And yet God uses this order; and this is a high and singular wisdom in his sight, which the world takes to be most extreme madness.

Can the world show a cause why he suffered the great multitude of innocent children to be murdered by Herod of Ascalon, or why he put that most holy man John the Baptist into the hands of Herod his son to be beheaded, and that in prison, in secret without open judgment, most tyrannously? Why he suffered his beloved apostle James to be beheaded of another Herod? (Acts xii.) Why he suffered his beloved seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to be four hundred years in thraldom and bondage, and under Pharaoh? And all the stock of Judah and Benjamin, his beloved children and church, to come under the power, sword, and tyranny of Nebuchadnezzar? No, verily; but his true catholic church knows divers causes thereof, which are now too long to rehearse, and which I would right gladly show, if I had time. §

But this I am right sure of; that it was not because that the aforesaid godly men were in heresies, and subject to false gods' services and idolatry, and that their adversaries were men of God, and beloved of God. The contrary was true; John Baptist was beloved of God, and Herod hated, and so of the rest: and John Baptist, the innocent children, James, the children of Israel in Egypt and in Babylon, were the catholic members and people of God. And their adversaries, into whose hands they were put and delivered, and that of God, by his good will and pleasure, were idolaters, and the people of the devil; but they would be called the chief members of God, and rejoiced that they had the true God, and that it was now declared by miracle, that the Israelites had but a false god, and a false religion, seeing they were delivered into the Babylonians' hands. And all the others (the Herods and Pharaoh I mean) plainly determined, that if the men, whom they killed and handled evil, had been God's people, God would never have suffered them to have come into their hands, but rather have done the contrary, and have let

John Baptist kill Herod, and the Israelites Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. Even the like is now to be seen in us, and in our most cruel adversaries.

They are not therefore the catholic church, because our merciful God hath at this present given our lives into their hands ; neither are we therefore heretics, because we suffer punishment at their hands, as the lord chancellor by his rejoicing seemeth to gather. The contrary is hereby to be gathered, that we are the members of the true catholic church, because we suffer for the same doctrine which John Baptist, James, the Israelites, yea, Christ himself, and the apostles did teach ; of whom none taught any thing of our adversaries' doctrine, namely, that the rotten antichristian head of Rome should be the head of Christ's church : but they have manifestly taught the contrary, especially Paul, in the second to the Thessalonians, John in the Revelation, Daniel xi., which thing, if I might have life and books, I would, by God's grace, so set forth that all the world should see it : and that our adversaries, with their antichristian head, are the members of the devil's church, as they undoubtedly are.

And in like case as the above-mentioned holy men, though they in their days were counted to be heretics, seditious, and disturbers of the whole world. For unto John Baptist it was said, (John i.) Wherefore baptizest thou, if thou be not Elias, nor that prophet, &c. As who should say, Thou hast no such authority to begin a new ceremony in the church. For we are in ordinary possession of the church, and of us thou hast received no such power : we abide by our circumcision. And the like could I declare of James, and of all the apostles and prophets, and of our Saviour Christ himself, who were all condemned as heretics and blasphemers of God, and disturbers of the whole world. Paul and Silas, (Acts xvi.) heard like words of the Philippians ; These men trouble our city, seeing they are Jews, and preach institutions which are not lawful for us to receive, seeing we be Romans. And in Athens, the wise men of this world, and such as give their endeavour to wisdom, said of St. Paul, What will this prater, (as my lord chancellor said to me, Shall we suffer this fellow to prate? when I would fain have said that which I have here written,) trifler, news carrier or bringer, that telleth whatsoever men will have him for gain and advantage, that will for a piece of bread say what ye will have him, &c.?

And another said in the same place, He seemeth to be a preacher of new doctrines, &c. And, (Acts xxi.) the Jews said by Paul, laying hands on him, "Help, O ye Israelites, say they; this is the man that teaches all men every where against the people (meaning the Jews) and the law of this place" (meaning Jerusalem;) and yet was never a word of this true. And (Acts xxii.) the same Jews said of Paul, Out of the earth with that man, or away with him. For it is not lawful for him to live, or he is not worthy to live.

And how many more of these examples are there to be found in the bible? Although, I say, these men were in their days taken for heretics of them that were then in authority, and of the great multitude of the world, yet it is now well known, yea, and very shortly after their deaths this was known, yea, and even in their lives also unto the true catholic church, that they were not only the chief and special members of the true catholic church, but also the founders and builders thereof, notwithstanding the sinister judgment that the wise and mighty men, and the great multitude of the world had of them, and in their consciences they were always assuredly certified of the same. Even the same shall the world find true in us, shortly after our deaths, as also there are at this hour, the Lord be thanked therefore, not a few that already know it, as we ourselves also are by God's grace assuredly certified in our consciences, that we are not heretics, but members of the true catholic church; and that our adversaries, the bishops and popish clergy, who will have that title, are the members of Satan's church, and their antichristian head of Rome with them.

But here will they cry out, Lo! these men will be still like John Baptist, the apostles, and the prophets, &c. I answer, we make not ourselves like unto them, in the singular virtues and gifts of God given unto them, as of doing miracles, and of many other things. The similitude and likeness of them and us consists not in all things, but only in this, that we are like them in doctrine, and in the suffering of persecution and infamy for the same.

That we have preached their very doctrine, and none other, we are able sufficiently to declare by their writings; and by writing, for my part, I have proffered to prove the same, as it is now often said. And for this cause we suffer the like reproach, shame, and rebuke of the world, and the

like persecution, losing of our lives and goods, forsaking, as our master Christ commands, father, mother, sister, brethren, wives, children, and all that there is, being assured of a joyful resurrection, and to be crowned in glory with them, according to the infallible promises made unto us in Christ our only and sufficient Mediator, Reconciler, Priest, and Sacrifice, who hath pleased the Father, and quieted and pacified his wrath against our sins, and made us without spot or wrinkle in his sight, by imputation; although we, of and in ourselves, are bespotted and blotted with many filthy sins, which if the great mercy granted in Christ did not put away, by not imputing them unto us, of his measureless unspeakable mercy and love to save us, they would have brought us to everlasting damnation, and death perpetual.

Herein, and in no other, do we affirm ourselves to be like unto our head Christ and all his apostles, prophets, martyrs, and saints. And herein ought all christian men to be like them; and herein are all true christian men and women to be like them, every one, according to the measure of the faith that God hath dealt unto them, and to the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit given unto them. But let us now consider, that if it be God's good will and pleasure to give his own beloved heart, that is, his beloved church, and the members thereof, into the hands of their enemies, to chasten, try, and prove them, and to bring them to the true unfeigned acknowledging of their own natural stubbornness, disobedience towards God and his commandments, as touching the love of God and of their brethren or neighbours; and their natural inclination, readiness, and desire to love creatures, to seek their own lusts, pleasures, and things forbidden of God, to obtain a true and earnest repentance and sorrowfulness therefore, and to make them sigh and cry for the forgiveness of the same, and for the aid of the Spirit, daily to mortify and kill the said evil desires and lusts, yea, and their often falling unto gross outward sins, as did David, Peter, Magdalen, and others, to rise again also thereout with a mighty crying for mercy, with many other causes; let us also consider what He hereafter doth with the said enemies, into whose hands he hath given his tenderly beloved dearlings to be chastened and tried.

Whereas he but chastens his dearlings, and crosses them for a small while, according to his good pleasure, as all

fathers do with their children, (Hebrews xii.; Proverbs iii,) he utterly destroys, yea, and everlastingly condemns the unrepentant enemies. Let Herod tell me what he won by killing James, and persecuting Peter, and Christ's tender dearlings, and beloved spouse and wife, his church. Verily, God thought him not worthy to have death ministered unto him by men or angels, or any worthy creatures; but those small, and yet most vile vermin, lice and worms, must consume and kill his beastly, vile, and tyrannous body!

Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, for all their pride and most mighty power, must at the length let God's dearlings go freely away out of their land, yea, out of their bands and tyranny. For when it could not be obtained at their hands, that God's congregation might have true mercy ministered unto them, but the counterfeit mercy of these our days, that is to say, extreme cruelty, and even the very and most horrible and cruel death, God arose and awoke out of his sleep, and destroyed those enemies of his flock, with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm.

Pharaoh did with most great and intolerable labours and burdens, oppress and bring under the poor Israelites, and yet did the courtiers undoubtedly noise abroad, that the king was merciful unto them, to suffer them to live in the land, and to set them to work, that they might get them their livings. If he should thrust them out of his land, whither should they go, like a sort of vagabonds and runagates? This title and name of mercy would that tyrant have, and so did his flattering false courtiers spread his vain praise abroad.

Have not we the like examples now-a-days? O that I had now time to write certain things pertaining to our Winchester's mercy! How merciful he hath been to me and to my good brethren, I will not speak of; neither yet the duke of Suffolk's most innocent daughter, and to her as innocent husband. For although their fathers were faulty, yet had their youth and lack of experience deserved a pardon by all true and merciful men's judgments. O that I had time to paint out this matter aright! but there are many alive that can do it much better, when I am dead. Pharaoh had his plagues, and his most flourishing land was by counterfeit mercy, which was indeed right cruelty and abominable tyranny, utterly destroyed. And think ye that bloody butcherly bishop of Winchester and his most

bloody brethren shall escape? Or that England shall for their offences, and specially for the maintenance of their idolatry, and wilful following of them, not abide as great brunts? Yes, undoubtedly.

If God look not mercifully upon England, the seeds of utter destruction are sown in it already, by these hypocritical tyrants and antichristian prelates, popish papists, and double traitors to their natural country. And yet they speak of mercy, of blessing, of the catholic church, of unity, of power, and strengthening of the realm. This double dissimulation will show itself one day when the plague cometh, which will undoubtedly light upon those crown-shorn captains, and that shortly, whatsoever the godly and the poor realm suffer in the mean while by God's good sufferance and will.

Spite of Nebuchadnezzar's beard and maugre his heart, the captive, thrall, and miserable Jews must come home again, and have their city and temple builded up again by Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c. and the whole kingdom of Babylon must go to ruin, and be taken of strangers, the Persians and the Medes. So shall the dispersed English flock of Christ be brought again into their former state, or to a better, I trust in the Lord God, than it was in innocent king Edward's days, and our bloody Babylonical bishops and the whole crown-shorn company brought to utter shame, rebuke, ruin, decay, and destruction. For God cannot, and undoubtedly will not, suffer for ever their abominable lying, false doctrine, their hypocrisy, blood-thirst, whoredom, idleness, their pestilent life, pampered in all kinds of pleasure, their Thrasonical boasting pride, their malicious, envious, and poisoned stomachs, which they bear towards his poor and miserable christians.

Peter truly warns, that if judgment begins at the house of God, what shall be the end of them that believe not the gospel? If the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinful appear? Some shall have their punishment here in this world and in the world to come; and they that do escape in this world shall not escape everlasting damnation.—

After that John Rogers, as ye have heard, had been long and straitly imprisoned, lodged in Newgate amongst thieves, often examined, and very uncharitably treated,

and at length unjustly and most cruelly, by wicked Winchester, condemned; on the fourth of February, in the year of our Lord 1555, being Monday in the morning, he was warned suddenly, by the keeper's wife of Newgate, to prepare himself to the fire; who then being sound asleep, scarce with much jogging could be awaked. At length being raised and waked, and bid to make haste, then said he, If it be so, I need not to tie my points; and so was had down, first to Bonner to be degraded. That done, he craved of Bonner but one petition. And Bonner asking what that should be: Nothing, said he, but that I might speak a few words with my wife before my burning. But that could not be obtained of him. Then said he, You declare your charity what it is: and so he was brought into Smithfield by master Chester and master Woodroof, then sheriffs of London, there to be burnt; where he showed most constant patience, not using many words, for he could not be permitted; but only exhorted the people constantly to remain in that faith and true doctrine, which he before had taught, and they had learned, and for the confirmation, whereof he was not only content patiently to suffer and bear all such bitterness and cruelty as had been showed him, but also most gladly to resign up his life, and to give his flesh to the consuming fire, for the testimony of the same.

Briefly, and in few words to comprehend the whole order of his life, doings, and martyrdom; First, this godly master Rogers was committed to prison, as is above said, and there continued a year and a half. In prison he was joyful, and earnest in all he went about. He wrote much; his examinations he penned with his own hand, which else had never come to light. Wherein is to be noted by the way a memorable working of God's providence. Ye heard a little above how master Rogers craved of Bonner, going to his burning, that he might speak a few words before with his wife, which could not be granted. What these words were, which he had to say to his wife, it is for no man certainly to define.

Likely it may be supposed that his purpose was, amongst other things, to signify unto her of the book written of his examinations and answers, which he had privily hid in a secret corner of the prison where he lay. But where man's power lacketh, see how God's providence worketh. For notwithstanding that during the time of his imprisonment,

strait search there was to take away his letters and writings, yet after his death, his wife, and one of her sons, called Daniel, coming into the place where he lay, to seek for his books and writings, and now ready to go away, it chanced her son, beforenamed, casting his eye aside, to spy a black thing, for it had a black cover, belike because it should not be known, lying in a blind corner under a pair of stairs; who, willing his mother to see what it was, found it to be the book written with his own hand, containing these his examinations and answers, with other matters above specified.*

Furthermore, amongst other words and sayings, which may seem prophetically to be spoken by him, this also may be added, and is notoriously to be marked, that he spake, being in prison, to the printer of the present book, who then also was laid up for like cause of religion :† Thou, said he, shalt live to see the alteration of this religion, and the gospel freely preached again; and therefore have me commended to my brethren, as well in exile as others, and bid them to be circumspect in displacing the papists, and putting good ministers into churches, or else their end will be worse than ours. And for lack of good ministers to furnish churches, his device was, master Hooper also agreeing to the same, that for every ten churches some one good and learned superintendent should be appointed, who

* Daniel Rogers was about thirteen when his father was burned; Strype relates that he afterwards studied at Wittemberg under Melancthon, and at Oxford. In queen Elizabeth's reign he was employed as an agent among the protestants on the continent, and made many important communications to secretary Cecil. Wood speaks of him as the most accomplished gentleman of his time, a very good man and excellently learned. Others, however, consider this Daniel Rogers not to have been the son of the martyr, but of another protestant of the same name.

† John Day, who may be called the printer of the English reformation. In the reign of Edward VI. he printed many writings of the reformers. During queen Mary's reign he was imprisoned for the truth, and though he was released he almost wholly refrained from pursuing his business. On the accession of queen Elizabeth he resumed his trade, and many of the most valuable works of the reformers were set forth at his expense and risk. Among these particularly may be enumerated those of Becon, Tindal, Frith, &c. but especially that invaluable work, "The Acts and Monuments of the Church." This work occupied Fox and several assistants eleven years; it was warmly encouraged by bishop Grindal, but certainly Day was mainly instrumental in its completion. The Acts and Monuments, or, as it is more commonly called, "Fox's Martyrs," is too well known to render any account of it necessary in this place. Day was opposed by many of his trade, "who hindered what they could the sale of his books;" but by the assistance of archbishop Parker he was enabled to open a shop in St. Paul's church-yard, and thus many of the valuable writings now reprinted in "The British Reformers" were widely circulated.

should have under him faithful readers, such as might well be got, so that popish priests should be clean put out, and the bishop once a year to oversee the profiting of the parishes; and if the minister did not his duty, as well in profiting himself in his book, and his parishioners in good instructions, so that they might be trained by little and little to give a reckoning how they profited, then he to be expelled, and another to be put in his place; and the bishop to do the like with the superintendent. This was his counsel and request; showing moreover, and protesting in his commendations to his brethren by the printer aforesaid, that if they would not so do, their end he said, would be worse than theirs.

Over and besides divers other things touching master Rogers, this is not to be forgotten, how in the days of king Edward the sixth there was a controversy among the bishops and clergy, about wearing of priest's caps, and other attire belonging to that order. Master Rogers being one of that number who never went otherwise than in a round cap, during all the time of king Edward, affirming that he would not agree to that decrement of uniformity, but upon this condition, that if they would needs have such an uniformity of wearing the cap, tippet, &c. then it should also be decreed withal, that the papists, for a difference between them and others, should be constrained to wear upon their sleeves a chalice with a host upon it. Whereunto if they would consent, he would agree to the other, otherwise he would not, he said, consent to the setting forth of the same, nor ever wear the cap, as indeed he never did.

To proceed now further in describing the doings of this man, during the time while he remained prisoner in Newgate, he was to the prisoners beneficial and liberal, for whom he had thus devised, that he with his fellows should have but one meal a day, they paying notwithstanding for the charges of the whole; the other meal should be given to them that lacked on the other side of the prison. But Alexander their keeper, a strait man, and a right Alexander, a coppersmith indeed, of whose doings more shall be said, God willing, hereafter, would in no case suffer that. The Sunday before he suffered, he drank to master Hooper, being then underneath him, and bade them commend him unto him, and tell him, there was never little fellow better would stick to a man than he would stick to

him, presupposing they should be burnt together, although it happened otherwise; for master Rogers was burnt alone. And thus much briefly concerning the life and such acts of master Rogers, as I thought worthy noting.

Now when the time came, that he, being delivered to the sheriffs, should be brought out of Newgate to Smithfield, the place of his execution, first came to him master Woodroof, one of the sheriffs, and calling master Rogers unto him, asked him if he would revoke his abominable doctrine and his evil opinions of the sacrament of the altar. Master Rogers answered and said, That which I have preached I will seal with my blood. Then, quoth master Woodroof, thou art a heretic.—That shall be known, quoth Rogers, at the day of judgment.—Well, quoth master Woodroof, I will never pray for thee.—But I will pray for you, quoth master Rogers; and so he was brought the same day, which was Monday the fourth of February, by the sheriffs towards Smithfield, saying the fifty-first psalm by the way, all the people wonderfully rejoicing at his constancy, with great praises and thanks to God for the same: and there in the presence of master Rochester, comptroller of the queen's household, sir Richard Southwell,* both the sheriffs, and a wonderful number of people, he was burnt into ashes, washing his hands in the flame as he was in burning.

A little before his burning at the stake, his pardon was brought if he would have recanted: but he utterly refused it. He was THE FIRST MARTYR of all the blessed company that suffered in queen Mary's time; he gave the first adventure upon the fire.

His wife and children, being eleven in number, ten able to go, and one sucking on her breast, met him by the way as he went toward Smithfield. This sorrowful sight of his own flesh and blood, dear as they were to him, could yet nothing move him, but that he constantly and cheerfully took his death with wonderful patience, in the defence and cause of Christ's gospel.

In addition to his biblical labours, Rogers translated some homilies and other pieces of Melancthon. Tanner also mentions a volume of sermons and lectures upon the gospel of St. John, with a few other pieces.

* He was at first inclined to favour the reformation, but afterwards a persecutor.

PREFACE TO A WORK,

ENTITLED

A WEIGHING AND CONSIDERING

OF

THE INTERIM,

By the honour-worthy and highly-learned PHILIP MELANCTHON.*

Most dear reader—Because I with great grief have now often heard that the highly learned and no less godly, gentle, and loving man, Philip Melancthon, is highly belied; in that a great sort openly say that he hath denied the truth, or, (that I may use their own words,) recanted, which they say only to hinder the furtherance of God's truth, I could do no less than turn into our English speech, and also put out this little treatise of his. Not so much for the defence of his most named and known fame's sake, which he hath yet hitherto kept undefiled, so that even the greatest enemies of the gospel neither could nor have said otherwise of him, as for the comforting of many godly and christian hearts, which have been not a little dismayed and discouraged through such lies. And verily not without a cause, for his denying would do more harm to the truth in these last and most perilous times than any tongue and pen can express. And God of his goodness, bountiful mercy, and great power, grant that may never befall. At this time also, thanks be to God therefore, he hath not only not denied the truth, but also, after his old accustomed christian manner, plainly confessed and acknowledged it, which this his answer to the Interim enough witnesses.

And although this his writing is short, and answers not to all the points of the Interim, for that would ask great labour and long time, yet it plainly answers to the greatest misuses, and to the very sinews of the Romish bishop's most tyrannous kingdom, contained in that book.

He also shows tokens enough in the book, that he will at leisure, and more largely, write upon many points thereof. I received also a letter with this treatise from another godly and

* Rogers prefixed this preface to his translation of a small tract, written by Melancthon in refutation of the Interim—a statement of doctrine set forth by the emperor Charles V., in the hope of effecting a compromise between the papists and protestants. A full account of the part which Melancthon took in these transactions, is given in the sixth volume of the History of the Church of Christ. It is inserted here, as giving an account of the Interim, which is frequently referred to in the writings of the reformers, and also as it shows the difficulties in which Melancthon involved himself by his indecisive proceedings upon this subject.

learned man, wherein is written that other and divers learned men in Germany have in hand to show their meaning in writing as touching the same, so that we may be of much better comfort than our papists gladly would see, yea than many of the good and faithful are, that the Interim will be withstanded, and not so soon and easily received as the papists hope, and many christians fear. This, I say, chiefly caused me to put out this little book at this time.

But for that there may be many who know not what that Interim means, for some have not seen, and some have not heard of it, yea and the most understand not the word, as they who understand no Latin, or not very well, need drives me to show both what it is, and also the meaning of the word. Interim, is a book which, at the emperor's majesty's commandment, was printed and put forth, about the beginning of June, in this year of our Saviour's birth, 1548, wherein is commanded that all the cities in Dutch land (Germany) which have received the word of God, and made a change of ceremonies according to the word, shall reform their churches again, and turn to the old popish ordinances as a dog to his vomit, or a washen swine to the mire.

Thus have ye heard what it is; now hear what the word signifies or betokens.—INTERIM, is as much as to say, "in the mean season, or in the mean while." And therefore have they christened the child, and given it this name because they will that we keep all the things commanded and contained in that book, in the mean while, from the parliament (diet) holden at Augsburg till there be a general council holden. There they think to make that matter worse, but God sitteth above in heaven, and haply thinketh otherwise. For because it had been a hasty work to have changed all things at once, they, of their great—I had almost said grievous and merciless—mercy, have borne with us in two things, that is to say, in the marriage of priests, and receiving the communion in both kinds. But how long forsooth?—interim—that is, in the mean while, till the general council come. And they think then to bear no longer with us, no nor with Christ himself, for then they think to be so strong, that neither Christ himself, nor all that will abide by him, shall be able to withstand them. This is the meaning of the word in English.

Unto this Interim and the meaning thereof hath the above-named Philip Melancthon answered, and written this present treatise, and he showeth to what things a christian man may agree, and which things may be changed and which not. In which treatise the reader shall well perceive that he neither hath denied the truth which he hath thus long taught and acknowledged, nor yet thinketh to do so—which virtue and high gift of God, the almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, increase in him, and all the christians, to the honour and glory of his holy name, increase of his knowledge, and saving of many souls. Amen. At London, 1st August, 1548.

THE

HISTORY, MARTYRDOM, AND LETTERS

OF

M. LAWRENCE SAUNDERS,

RECTOR OF ALHALLOWS IN BREAD STREET IN LONDON, WHO AFTER FAITHFUL TESTIMONY OF HIS DOCTRINE BY LONG IMPRISONMENT, WAS CONDEMNED TO THE FIRE; AND AT COVENTRY, (BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE NO DOUBT TO CONFIRM WHAT HE HAD IN THAT COUNTRY ALSO FRUITFULLY TAUGHT,) SUFFERED WITH MOST VALIANT AND CHEERFUL COURAGE,

A. D. 1555.

THE HISTORY AND MARTYRDOM

OF

M. LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

Lawrence Saunders was the son of respectable parents. He was educated at Eton, and afterwards was a scholar at King's college, Cambridge, for three years, when his mother apprenticed him to a merchant named sir William Chester. Fox relates, "Thus by the mind of his friends, Lawrence should needs have been a merchant; but almighty God, who hath his secret working in all things, saw better for his servant, as it fell out in the end; for although Saunders was bound by fast indenture to play the merchant, yet the Lord so wrought inwardly in his heart, that he could find no liking in that vocation, so that when his other fellows were busily occupied, he would secretly withdraw himself into some private corner, and there fall into his solitary lamentations, as one not liking that trade and manner of life."

Fox proceeds to state, that "His master being a good man, and hearing his apprentice thus in his secret prayers inwardly to mourn by himself," inquired into the cause of Saunders's troubles, and perceiving his desire for more serious pursuits, gave up his indentures; he then returned to Cambridge, where he applied himself earnestly to the study of the holy scripture, to fit himself for the office of a preacher, becoming master of the Hebrew as well as of the Latin and Greek.

Fox says, "In study he was diligent and painful, in godly life he declared the fruits of a well exercised conscience; he prayed often, and with great fervour, and in his prayers, as also at other times, he had his part of spiritual exercises, which his hearty sighing to God declared: in which, when any special assault did come, by prayer he felt present relief; then was his company marvellous comfortable, for as his exercises were special teaching, so in the end they proved singular consolations, wherein he became so expert, that within short space he was able to comfort others which were in any affliction, by the consolation wherewith the Lord did comfort him."

Saunders was ordained in the beginning of king Edward's reign, and preached successively at Fotheringay,

Litchfield, and Church Langton in Leicestershire. He was afterwards appointed to Allhallows, Bread Street, just before queen Mary's accession to the throne, and went into the country to resign his former living; but "seeing the dreadful days at hand," he "preached with diligence at both these benefices, seeing he could resign neither of them but into the hands of a papist."—Thus passed he to and fro in preaching, until the proclamation was put forth to the contrary, and he was by force prevented from continuing his office in the country. He then returned to his flock in London, and on his way, October 14, 1553, he was overtaken by sir John Mordaunt, one of the queen's council, who advised him to forsake his cure. Saunders replied, "How shall I then be discharged before God, if any be sick and desire consolation, if any want good counsel and need instruction, or if any should fall into error and receive false doctrine?" He offered, however, to submit to lawful authority, and to obey if sir John forbad him, and had power to do so. The knight replied that he would not forbid, but only advised him to forbear, and informed Bonner of Saunders's intention to preach on the morrow. He preached in the morning, earnestly warning the people against the corruptions of popery from 2 Cor. xi. 2—4, and was ready to give another exhortation in the afternoon, when an officer of the bishop's interrupted him, and took him before Bonner. Here he was accused of treason, heresy, and sedition, and commanded to write what he believed of transubstantiation. At that time it was lawful to do so, but Saunders when complying with Bonner's command, told him he knew it was intended to be brought against him afterwards, which in fact was Bonner's intention, and he so made use of it. Saunders was then sent to Gardiner, who treated him with much roughness, and committed him to prison.

Saunders was kept a prisoner in the Marshalsea for fifteen months, during which time he was occupied much as his fellow-martyrs, in writing letters, and conferring, both with friends and adversaries, as occasion offered. Full power to proceed against the protestants as heretics having then been given, he was brought before Gardiner and his companions; after several examinations he was condemned, and sent to the compter in Bread Street. The account of his last hours is best given in the words of Fox.

The fourth day of February, 1555, the bishop of

London came to the prison, where he was to degrade him, which when he had done, Lawrence Saunders said to him, "I thank God I am none of your church."

The day following, in the morning, the sheriff of London delivered him to certain of the queen's guard, who were appointed to carry him to the city of Coventry, there to be burned. The first night they came to St. Alban's, where master Grimoald, a man who had more store of good gifts than of great constancy, spoke with him.

After master Saunders had given him a lesson proper for his lightness, he took a cup in his hand, and asked him if he would pledge him of that cup of which he would begin to him. Grimoald, by his shrugging and shrinking showing what he was, said, "Of that cup which is in your hand I will pledge you; but of that other which you mean, I will not promise you."—"Well," said master Saunders, "my dear Lord Jesus Christ has begun to me of a more bitter cup than mine shall be, and shall I not pledge my most sweet Saviour? Yes, I hope."

After they were come to Coventry, the same night a poor shoemaker, who was wont to serve him with shoes, came to him after his manner, and said, "O my good master, God strengthen and comfort you."—"Gramercy, good shoemaker," replied master Saunders, "and I pray thee to pray for me, for I am the unmeetest man for this high office, that ever was appointed to it; but my gracious God and dear Father is able to make me strong enough." That same night he was put into the common gaol among other prisoners, where he slept little, but spent the night in prayer and instructing of others.

The next day, which was the eighth of February, he was led to the place of execution in the park, without the city, going in an old gown and a shirt, bare-footed, and oft-times fell flat on the ground, and prayed. When he was come nigh to the place, the officer appointed to see the execution done, said to master Saunders that he was one of them which marred the queen's realm with false doctrine and heresy, "wherefore thou hast deserved death, but yet, if thou wilt revoke thine heresies, the queen hath pardoned thee; if not, yonder fire is prepared for thee."

To whom master Saunders answered, "It is not I, nor my fellow-preachers of God's truth, that have hurt the queen's realm, but it is yourself, and such as you are, who have always resisted God's holy word; it is you who have

and do mar the queen's realm. I hold no heresies; but the doctrine of God, the blessed gospel of Christ, that hold I, that believe I, that have I taught, and that will I never revoke." With that the tormentor cried, "Away with him." And away from him went master Saunders with a joyful courage towards the fire. He fell to the ground, and prayed; he rose up again, and took the stake to which he should be chained, in his arms, and kissed it, saying, "Welcome the cross of Christ: welcome everlasting life;" and being fastened to the stake, and fire put to him, full sweetly he slept in the Lord.

And thus have ye the history of Lawrence Saunders, whom I might well compare to St. Lawrence, or any other of the old martyrs of Christ's church, both for the fervent zeal of the truth and gospel of Christ, and the most constant patience in his sufferings, as also for the cruel torments that he in his patient body did sustain in the flame of fire: for so his cruel enemies handled him, that they burned him with green wood, and other smothering rather than burning, fuel, which put him to much more pain; but the grace and most plentiful consolation of Christ, which never forsaketh his servants, and gave strength to St. Lawrence, gave also patience to this Lawrence, above all that his torments could work against him; which well appeared by his quiet standing, and sweet sleeping in the fire, as is above declared.

Dr. Pendleton and M. Saunders meeting together in the beginning of queen Mary's reign, and speaking of the persecution which was likely to ensue, about which Saunders showed much weakness and many fears, Pendleton said to him—"What, man! There is much more cause for me to fear, than for thee, forasmuch as I have a big and fat body; yet will I see the utmost drop of this grease of mine melted away, and the last gobbet of this flesh of mine consumed to ashes, before I will forsake Jesus Christ and his truth which I have professed." Yet not long after, when the hour of trial came, poor, feeble, faint-hearted Saunders, by the power and goodness of God, sealed the truth with his blood; while proud Pendleton played the apostate, and turned papist.

Saunders was an active and faithful preacher of the gospel. Several of his letters have been preserved by Coverdale and Fox. They will interest and edify the christian reader.

LETTERS

OF

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

LETTER I.

To master Robert Glover and John Glover, two worthy brethren in the flesh, and in the Lord; the one afterwards a martyr, the other a faithful confessor.

My dearly beloved, and mine own hearts in the Lord, with all yours and the rest who with you unfeignedly fear God, and comfort yourselves in his sweet Christ, I beseech you be thankful unto that merciful Lord always for his unspeakable goodness, and among others for me his most unworthy minister. I thank my God Christ, I was never better acquainted with him in all my life, and I perceive he is no less loving than his word warrants him to be.

Be thankful, I say, and pray, pray. The prayer of the righteous availeth much. I was at this present much occupied, else I would have enlarged in some matter needful, &c. The devil roareth, because he cannot have his foul will; he must be at length eased by the blood of God's saints, and yet that shall be his bane be he sure, and that shortly by God's goodness. Be joyful, and fear not little flock, saith our sweet Comforter, for it pleaseth your Father to provide a kingdom for you. (Luke xii.) Even so, Amen, come, Lord Jesu, come quickly.

The heavenly blessing of God be with you all.

In the Marshalsea, 28th October, 1553.

A prisoner of the Lord, the Lord's name be blessed for ever,

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

LETTER II.

A part of a letter of Lawrence Saunders, sent to the bishop of Winchester, as an answer to certain things wherewith he had before charged him.

Touching the cause of my imprisonment, I doubt whether I have broken any law or proclamation. In my

doctrine I did not, forasmuch as at that time it was permitted by the proclamation to use, according to our conscience, such service as was then established. My doctrine was then agreeable unto my conscience and the service then used. The act which I did,* was such as, being indifferently† weighed, sounded to no breaking of the proclamation, or at the least no wilful breaking of it, forasmuch as I caused no bell to be rung, neither occupied I any place in the pulpit, after the order of sermons or lectures; but, be it that I did break the proclamation, this long time of continuance in prison may be thought to be more than sufficient punishment for such a fault.

Touching the charging of me with my religion, I say with St. Paul, This I confess, that, after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my forefathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets, and have hope towards God, &c. (Acts xxiv.) And herein study I to have always a clear conscience towards God and towards man; so that I call God to witness I have a conscience. And this my conscience is not grounded upon vain fantasy, but upon the infallible verity of God's word, with the witnessing of his chosen church agreeable unto the same.

It is an easy thing for those who take Christ for their true Pastor, and are the very sheep of his pasture, to discern the voice of their true Shepherd from the voice of wolves, hirelings, and strangers; forasmuch as Christ saith, (John x.) My sheep hear my voice; yea, and thereby they shall have the gift to know the right voice of the true Shepherd, and so to follow him, and to avoid the contrary; as he also saith, The sheep follow the Shepherd, for they know his voice; a stranger will they not follow, but will fly from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger.

Such inward inspiration the Holy Ghost putteth into the children of God, being indeed taught of God, but otherwise unable to understand the true way of their salvation. And albeit that the wolf, as Christ saith, cometh in sheep's clothing, yet he saith, By their fruits ye shall know them, (Matt. vii.) For there are certain fruits whereby the wolf is bewrayed, notwithstanding that otherwise, in sundry sorts of devout holiness in outward show, he seemeth so

* He means public preaching of God's word in his own parish, called Allhallows in Bread Street, in the city of London.—*Fox.*

† Impartially.

simple a sheep. That the Romish religion is ravening and wolfish is apparent in three principal points.

First, It robs God of his due and only honour.

Secondly, It takes away the true comfort of conscience, in obscuring or rather burying of Christ and his office of salvation.

Thirdly, It spoils God of his true worship and service in spirit and truth, appointed in his prescript commandments, and drives men into that inconvenience, against the which Christ with the prophet Isaiah speaks sharply: This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. (Isa. xxix.) They worship me in vain, teaching the doctrine and precept of men. (Matt. xv.) And in another place, Ye cast aside the commandment of God, to maintain your own traditions.

Wherefore, I, in conscience, weighing the Romish religion, and by indifferent discussing thereof, finding the foundation unsteadfast, and the building thereupon but vain; and on the other side, having my conscience framed after the right and uncorrupt religion, ratified and fully established by the word of God, and the consent of his true church, I neither may nor do intend, by God's gracious assistance, to be pulled one jot from the same; no, though an angel out of heaven should preach another gospel, than that which I have received of the Lord.

And although that for lack either of such deep knowledge and profound judgment, or of expedite uttering of that which I do know and judge, as is required in an excellent clerk, I shall not be able sufficiently to answer, for the convincing of the gainsayer; yet nevertheless this my protestation shall be of me premised, that for the respect of the grounds and causes before considered, albeit I cannot, "explicita fide,"* as they call it, conceive all that is to be conceived, neither can discuss all that is to be discussed, nor can effectually express all that is to be expressed in the discourse of the doctrine of this most true religion, whereunto I am professed; yet do I bind myself, as by my humble simplicity, so by my "fidem implicitam,"* that is, by faith in generality, as they call it, to wrap my belief in the credit of the same, that no authority of that

* Explicita fides (explicit faith) is called of the schoolmen that faith whereof a reason may be given, and implicita fides (implicit faith) is that simple faith which leaneth only to the church, althoug no reason can be given thereof.—*Letters of the Martyrs.*

Romish religion, repugnant thereunto, shall by any means remove me from the same; though it may hap that our adversaries will labour to beguile us with enticing words, and seek to spoil us through philosophy and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men, and after the ordinances of the world, and not after Christ, &c.*

LETTER III.

To the archbishop Cranmer, bishop Ridley, and master Latimer, being prisoners in Oxford.

In my most humble wise, I salute you, most reverend fathers in Christ Jesus our Lord. Immortal thanks and everlasting praises be given unto that our Father of mercies, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, by whom we have redemption through his blood, &c. (Col. i.) Oh, most happy estate, that in an unspeakable wise our life is hid with Christ in God; but whensoever Christ, who is our life, shall show himself, then shall we also appear with him in glory. (1 Cor. xiii.) In the mean season, as our sight is but in a glass, even in a dark speaking, so we walk in faith, not after outward appearance; the which faith, although, for want of outward appearance, reason reputes but as vain; yet the chosen of God do know the effect thereof to bring a more substantial taste and lively fruition of true felicity and perfect blessedness than reason can reach, or senses conceive. By this faith we have in our possession all good things, yea, even those which the eye hath not seen, and the ear hath not heard, neither hath entered the heart of man, &c. (Isa. liv; 1 Cor. ii.) Then, if hereby we do enjoy all good things, it follows that we must needs possess, have, and enjoy you, most reverend fathers, who are no small part of our joy and good things given us of God.

We heretofore have had the fruition of you by bodily presence, to our inexplicable benefit; praised be that our

* And thus much of master Saunders's letter, so much as remaineth thereof. The residue, because it was rent away, I could not adjoin thereunto. Notwithstanding, by this already expressed, it is sufficient to understand how good was the cause and estate of this blessed child of God, being prisoner for Christ's cause.—*Fox.*

gracious God therefore. And now in spirit we have the experience of unspeakable comfort by your reverend fatherhoods, for that in this so glorious sort ye become a town set upon a hill, a candle upon a candlestick, a spectacle unto the world, and to the angels, and unto men. (Matt. v.) So that as we to our great comfort do feel, you also may assuredly say with St. Paul, that the things which happen unto us do chance unto the great furtherance of the gospel; so that our bonds in Christ are manifest, not only throughout all the judgment-hall, but in all whole Europe; insomuch that many of the brethren in the Lord, being encouraged through our bonds, dare more boldly speak the word without fear.

And herein as you have with St. Paul greatly to rejoice, so we rejoice with you, and we do indeed with you give thanks for this worthy excellent favour of our God towards you, that Christ is thus magnified in you, yea, and hereafter shall be magnified in your bodies, whether it be through life or death. Of which thing truly we are assured in our prayers for you and ministering of the Spirit; and although for your own parts Christ is unto you life, and death advantage, and that your desire is (as indeed it were better for you) to be loosed, and to be with Christ; yet for the church of Christ were it much more necessary that ye should abide in the flesh. Yea, that merciful God, even for his Christ's sake, grant that ye may abide and continue for the furtherance of the church, and rejoicing of faith, that the rejoicing thereof may be the more abundant through Christ by your restoring again. Amen. Amen.

But if it seem better unto the divine wisdom, that by speedy death he hath appointed you to glorify him, the Lord's will be done. Yea, even as we do rejoice, both in your behalf and also on our own, that God is magnified by life, and should be more abundantly glad for the continuance thereof, so we shall no less rejoice to have the same wrought by death. We shall give thanks for this honour given unto you, rejoicing that you are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and that it is given to you of God, not only that ye should believe in him, but also that ye should suffer for his sake. And herein we shall have to rejoice in the behalf of the church of Christ, whose faith may be the faster fixed upon God's verity, being confirmed with three such worthy witnesses. Oh! thanks be to God for this his unspeakable gift.

And now, most reverend fathers, that you may understand the truth of us and our estate, how we stand in the Lord, I do assure your reverences, partly by that which I perceive by such of our brethren as are here in bonds with me, partly by that which I hear of those who are in other places, and partly by that inward experience which I, most unworthy wretch, have of God's good comfort, (more abundance whereof I know there is in others,) you may be assured by God's grace, that you shall not be frustrate of your hope of our constant continuance in the cheerful confession of God's everlasting verity. For even as we have received the word of truth, even the gospel of our salvation, wherein we believing are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, which Spirit certifieth our spirit, that we are the children of God, and therefore God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, (Eph. i.; Rom. viii.; Gal. iv.) so after such portion as God measures unto us, we with the whole church of Christ, and with you, reverend fathers, receiving the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak, (2 Cor. iv.) for which we in this dangerous bondage and other afflictions, having even such a fight as we have seen in you, and have heard of you, are in no wise afraid of our adversaries. Phil. i.

And forasmuch as we have such an office, even as God hath had mercy on us, we go not out of kind, but even with you, after our little power, we labour to maintain the faith of the gospel, knowing most certainly, that though we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of this power might be God's, and not ours, yet shall we not be dashed in pieces; for the Lord will put his hand under us. When we are troubled on every side, yet we are not without shift; when we are in poverty, we are not utterly without something; when we suffer persecution, we are not forsaken therein; when we are cast down, yet we shall not perish. (2 Cor. iv.) But to communicate with our sweet Saviour Christ in bearing the cross, it is appointed unto us, that even with him also we shall be glorified; for it is a true saying, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we be patient, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he shall also deny us. (2 Tim. ii.) Wherefore we are of good cheer, always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that

the life of Jesus might appear also in our body. For we know, that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by the means of Jesus, and shall join us to himself together with you. Wherefore we are not wearied; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepares an exceeding and eternal weight of glory unto us, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor. iv.

We testify unto you, reverend fathers, that we draw these waters with joy out of the wells of the Saviour; and I trust we shall continually with you bless the Lord, and give thanks to the Lord out of these wells of Israel. We trust to be merry together at that great supper of the Lamb, whose spouse we are by faith, and there to sing that song of everlasting hallelujah. Amen. Yea, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

LETTER IV.

A letter sent to M. Farrar, bishop of St. David's, doctor Taylor, master Bradford, and M. Philpot.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord, &c. Good fathers and dear brethren, be thankful unto our most gracious God, who hath preserved us, and will, I doubt not, from blaspheming his blessed name. Yea, not only that, but also out of the mouths of very babes and sucklings shall be set forth his praise. They offer us, forsooth, our liberty and pardon, so that we will rise with them unto that faith which we with them were fallen from—yea or no, must be answered in haste. They will not admit any needful circumstances, but all, as heretofore, is most detestable and abominable. Rise with them we must unto the unity. A pardon, say I, of me must not be so dearly purchased. A pardon, I desire, but only so as to live with an unclogged conscience. The Donatists, say they, sought for such a singularity, but they were not meet to live in a commonwealth; no more are you, as you shall shortly understand. Wherefore away with him; yea, the time was named; within this sevennight. There are twelve hours in the day. (John xi.) Death shall be welcome, say I, as being

looked for long since, and yet to do justice were best for ye, for Abel's blood cried, ye know what. The Spirit of God be upon you, and God save your honours. Thus departed I from them. Pray, pray; ah! ah! I am a child, and cannot speak. My brother P. shall show you more herein. By him send me word what you have done. Fare ye well, and pray, pray. I would gladly meet with my good brother Bradford on the back side,* about eleven of the clock. Before that time I cannot start out, we have such outwalkers, but then will they be at dinner.

Yours, as you know,

L. SAUNDERS.

LETTER V.

To the professors of the gospel and true doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ in the town of Litchfield.

Grace and peace, with continuance in unfeigned faith and a good conscience, be unto you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

At what time it pleased that gracious God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wonderfully to work the deliverance of their offspring, the Israelites; even as he brought to pass the same by his mighty arm, so did he thereunto admit man's ministry as his ordinary instrument, and therefore instructed first Moses, that faithful servant of his, what was to be done, as also with what cheerful courage he should do the same. These people, by the hand of this Moses, were brought by no small perils, the midway toward their promised patrimony, when it pleased God to take unto himself his servant Moses from this miserable vale. Deut. xxxiv.

In whose place he appointed Joshua, that worthy leader of the Lord's people, who not only for his part did boldly take in hand so dangerous an enterprise, but also with earnest study stirred up his said people with lusty courage to go forward in the appointed passage of their jeopardous journey; yea, he was able abundantly to comfort them with such comforts as he himself received of his God, who at sundry times assured him thereof, saying unto him thus, Even as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee; I will

* In the early part of queen Mary's reign, several of the martyrs who were confined in the King's Bench and Marshalsea prisons, partly by the connivance of the keepers, used to meet together in the gardens or closes at the back of the prisons.

not forsake thee, neither leave thee; be thou therefore of good courage and strong, fear not, neither be dismayed, for I am with thee in all that thou takest in hand. (Josh. i.) Whatsoever things are written, are written for our doctrine, &c.

Dearly beloved, albeit that in these days it may be said truly that ye have very few such captains to be compared with Moses or Joshua, God's singular jewels; yet that same Lord, who is no changeling, but even the same merciful and almighty Defender of all his people at all times, doth and shall in some degree direct you his chosen children in the highway toward your heavenly inheritance, by the hand of a Moses, in some part resembling these two principal patterns. For though we your brethren, who heretofore by our vocation have sitten in the chair of Moses, and are spiritual captains, as Moses and Joshua, unto you; though, I say, we well know and acknowledge, how little we have to boast of, as of ourselves; yet this we have to rejoice of in the Lord our God, that as we have been of him appointed unto such a place and function, so we do not altogether degenerate.

For first, unto our own strengthening, even that gracious God, who biddeth us to be strong by the operation of his Spirit, performeth the same in some part in us all, glory be unto him therefore. Also in the word of the Lord we testify unto you to be strong in the Lord, and shrink not back because of the sundry temptations assaulting you in the passage unto your country through the wilderness of this world. Be content to be proved, as those people were. Do not addict yourselves unto fancying the fleshpots of Egypt, (Exod. xvi.) most unthankfully relinquishing the promised possession. We give you to know what warrant we have of prosperous success in such our proceedings; no less, be ye assured, than those former captains, Moses and Joshua, had. For besides that all the same most comfortable promises, which made them and their people to be bold to proceed in their enterprise, do belong unto us, we have to rejoice in our God, for his unmeasurable mercies more plentifully poured upon us by that abundant grace in his dear Son our Christ, in whom he offereth us all fulness of favour and benevolence, all readiness of deliverance, appointing all credit, without care, to be given unto such a governor.

Yea, and that same his Christ, who is made of him our

anointed Saviour, is now become our grand Captain ; yea, what is he not unto us, to do us good? He is our Shepherd, we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture ; he is our Husband, we are his spouse. He hath promised to keep his sheep that none shall snatch them out of his hands. (John x.) He hath promised to be with his church always, yea, and that effectually to be with it, even as the Head to give life unto the members and parts of the body ; even as the Vine-stock to quicken the vine-branches, and even as the most loving Husband to tender, cherish, defend, and keep his well-beloved spouse. Let us be bold to commit ourselves unto such a safe conductor, casting our care upon Him ; for were it not that he many times more cares for us, than we can for ourselves, it would not be well with us. Full little did Peter perceive any cause of grievance for that perilous fall, which after befell. (Luke xxii.) But that sovereign Shepherd beforehand espied the spiteful desire of that wolfish Satan to sift his Peter, that simple poor sheep, and therefore prayed to his Father that Peter's faith might not faint.

Such a Shepherd shall he be always unto his people, humbly complaining unto him in extreme dangers ; and great cause have we so to do, considering not only the greedy desire of this Satan most tyrannously raging like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, (1 Pet. v.) but also the imbecility in ourselves, being such as are not able to withstand the least of his assaults ; but, on the contrary, being overwhelmed with the waves, which are stirred up by these tempests of his temptations, we are compelled to cry with those disciples, who in their extremity cried, Save us, Lord, or else we perish. Matt. viii.

The times are perilous ; we must therefore be circumspect, and not solace ourselves in carnal security ; but being content to enter into the ship of Christ's cross, and exposing ourselves to all jeopardous passages in the adventurous journeying to our heavenly country, let us for this present voyage account it comfort enough to have the fellowship of such a fellow-venturer. He once being in the ship with his disciples, did with his word assuage the swelling of the sea so dangerous ; he hath not left us alone in the ship of this frail flesh, but joins with us in this dangerous journey, as well by his once being subject unto all bodily infirmities as we are, sin only excepted, as also by his assuring us of his gracious assistance, now that he is become before his heavenly Father, our Prince, our Priest,

and our Prophet, always present and ready to help by his power, propitiation, and inspiration of his Holy Spirit.

And what though he for a season do sleep, and do so suffer us, according to our feelings, to sink? He will be awaked, being pulled by prayer; and therefore he delays our speedy deliverance, even to fortify our faith by importunate prayer. Let us then with earnestness apply this business, and the rather in respect of the dangerous doting of this old age of the world; for it is with the men of this latter age of the world, as it is with a very aged man, who for impotency of the powers both of the mind and the body, is brought to much imbecility. Then do the wits by weakness wander out of the way; the body, by feebleness and default of the former strength, doth stagger, and full weakly doth any limb or part of that wretched body execute the function belonging unto it. In like manner is it with the church of Christ in this doting old age of the world. There is no such fulness in God's graces as heretofore hath been in the primitive church and the times immediately ensuing. There is less perfection in the faith, fear, and love towards God, and charity towards the brethren. There is less zeal to confess God, and less constancy to continue in God's truth, than was heretofore: and this is not strange unto those who observe the forespeakings of the scriptures, as well of the prophets, of our Saviour Christ, as also of his apostles, by whom it hath been signified beforehand what dangerous days should come in the latter times, as Matt. xxiv.; 2 Thess. ii.; 1 Tim. iv.; 2 Tim. iii.; 2 Pet. ii.

Wherefore let us, who are come into these latter dangerous times, first consider how that the Holy Ghost has given us warning thereof, and also that we by proof have experience of the verifying of the same. Let us now, I say, the more earnestly apply our humble petition unto that merciful Father, and his Son our sweet Saviour, who is the head of his church, even this his body, weak though it be, that he will vouchsafe, not so much to observe the backsliding and shrinking of this his feeble body, as to respect the forespeakings of these perilous times. And let us with and in the name of the whole church, remember often the prayer of David. (Psal. lxxi.) Lord, cast me not away in the time of mine old age, when my strength doth decay.

That time of the church is even now present; and truly if we be instant in prayer, we are not without warrant of

God's promises to obtain what we pray for. Yea, call upon me, saith he, in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee. (Psal. l.) For the elect's sake it is said, the dangerous days shall be shortened, (Matt. xxiv.;) yea, faithful is He that will not suffer us to be tempted above that we be able to abide. We may be bold to put our gracious God in remembrance of his old mercies, and with David say, O God! we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them. (Psal. xliv.) The testimonies of his word do teach us, how he has from the beginning alway gathered unto himself a congregation and church, unto which his chosen church, he has bound himself by his covenant of mercy to be their God and Saviour, and besides that has poured upon them his sundry blessings and benefits.

But again, it is to be seen in the scriptures how that even these God's peculiar people did at sundry times fall from that their heavenly profession, as well to idolatry and false gods' service, as also unto dissolute living, thereby provoking God's wrathful plagues and punishments, which indeed oftentimes, as they were often deserved, so they fell upon them. But even as the God of Israel visited the offences of his people with his rod of chastisement, so did he not at any time take away his mercies from them, and that for that covenant of mercy made unto them in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their forefathers. (Psal. lxxxix.) And therefore, when at any time through his grace, they by repentance turned unto him, he most fatherly embraced them with the arms of his mercy.

These things are written for us, that we in like wise should consider, first, the dignity whereunto we have been called, that is, even to be his church and people. Yea, in comparing our profession with either the heathenish Turks and infidels, or unto the people who profess this hypocritical papistry, we have to advance ourselves as the true children of Christ, for that we bear the right badges of God's true people, and that is the earnest desire towards the propagation of God's most holy word, and the right use of the sacraments agreeable to the same, having joined therewith a readiness of heart and mind to suffer affliction and persecution for the confession of our faith, or at the least rather than deny or put away faith and a good conscience. And, besides these outward notes and tokens,

declaring that we are the true church, there is a nearer token in God's elect, which is the inward testimony of God's Spirit, which beareth witness unto our spirit, that we are God's children, causing us to cry, Abba, Father, and being, indeed, the earnest of our salvation. Rom. viii.

But notwithstanding that we are thus promoted by our God, and dignified by his graces, yet must we consider how unworthily we have used in sundry wise these God's graces and blessings; yea, so unthankfully we have received them, that no less plagues by God's just judgment belong unto us, than were at that time due unto those his people. Wherefore let us faithfully confess that we have offended, with our forefathers; the which being done in our conversion unto the Lord our God with our whole heart, let us assure ourselves that even as he hath and doth visit our sins with this captivity of body and conscience, and such other plagues, being his rod of chastisement—so hath he not taken away his mercy from us, but will plentifully visit us with the same, even for that covenant of mercy made unto us, not in Abraham, Isaac, and David, but in that promised Seed of Abraham, in that spiritual David, even Jesus Christ, who is that peaceable Solomon, making peace between us and his Father by the offering of his body and shedding of his blood, by whose means we must look for the guilt of our sins to be forgiven, and the plagues thereby purchased, to be taken away. And now, dearly beloved, we are taught by that heavenly Spirit which our God hath given unto us, to seek comfort in these times of affliction, not in hope of rebellion, or fulfilling unprofitable, yea, pestilent Welsh prophecies,* but in the most comfortable, and glad tidings of the heavenly promises assured in his dear Christ.

And touching this most miserable estate of the spiritual captivity of conscience and bodily bondage wherein for our sins at present we are holden, let us first most obediently kiss this rod of our Father, by obedient submission, to abide all extremity that man may do unto us, rather than to forego faith and a good conscience. Let us also beseech our heavenly Father, for his Christ's sake, to leave off beating us, and to take away the rod, either by converting the hearts of those who afflict and persecute us,

* Prophecies attributed to Merlin and others. An act of parliament "against fond and fantastical prophecies," was enacted in the commencement of queen Elizabeth's reign.

for so did he sometimes take away the rod, as, namely, by converting of Nebuchadnezzar and Manasseh; or else, if such wicked scourges be not to be converted, but are reprobates, vessels of God's wrath, children of perdition, such upon whom it pleases God to show his judgments, and in whom he will show his power: if, I say, they be such, let us wish most earnestly that our God would speedily arise, that his and our enemies might shortly be scattered.

Yea, he knows what these execrable erectors of the Romish religion are; they are the proud builders of the Babylonical towers; they will climb up into God's kingdom by their own attempts, not expecting and waiting for God's help; yea, the Lord be judge betwixt them and us; he knoweth that as their buildings tend unto the destruction of that true and only foundation Christ, so our building, by God's word, hath and doth tend to the substantial laying of that only foundation, and to the establishing of Christ's chosen church upon that same rock, with an unfeigned faith and pure conscience; and also unto the building upon the same faith, all fruitful works of the Spirit, to serve God in holiness and righteousness, &c. Yea, that ever-living Lord knoweth that the earnest desire of our hearts, is even the greedy expectation of the glorious coming of that great Judge, unto whose judgment (lo! heaven and earth be witness, and ye God's saints) we do appeal. In the mean season abiding our God's good pleasure to do with us that which may most redound unto his glory, whether to live or die; nothing doubting in him to be strengthened, merely and cheerfully to make a sacrifice and burnt-offering for the confirmation of this infallible verity taught by us, and once received of you. And join with us, dear fellow-heirs, as we join with you, in humble prayer, that even as all we by faith are handfasted* unto our Husband, and knit unto our Head, Jesus Christ, and also are kindled by love one to another, as mutual members in this mystical body, so we may persevere and continue unto the end, and that by and in our Christ we may increase more, and abound in the spirit of grace and prayer, whereby to fetch all heavenly influence from that our head Christ, one for another, even as in the body one member ministereth unto another. Amen. Amen.

In the Marshalsea, 17th October, 1554.

A prisoner in the Lord, trusting shortly to be with the Lord. L. SAUNDERS.

* Contracted to each other.

LETTER VI.

His first letter to mistress Harrington.

Grace, mercy, and peace, in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Such is the knot wherewith true christians are compacted and joined together as members in the mystical body of Christ, that no man can express the advantages so well as they which have experience thereof; and yet neither can they by words be able to utter that which therein the conscience conceives indeed to surpass all understanding. And hereof can I, unworthy wretch, somewhat speak of experience, for that by exercise of the inward man and practice of conscience, I have some acquaintance with my good God and his sweet Christ, and namely, now in this my present estate it pleases that merciful Lord to give me some taste of his mercies, by the assurance and the sealing up of his gracious promises in my conscience by his Holy Spirit; whereby I do feel the incomparable benefit of his heavenly blessing poured upon us his chosen congregation. We are called in Christ with a holy vocation, we are grafted in him as branches in that so heavenly a vine, (John xv.) we are knit unto him as the sundry members of that body, whereof he only is the head, in whom all the body is coupled together in every joint, wherewith one ministereth unto another according to the operation, as every part hath his measure, and increaseth the body unto the edifying of itself in love; and we are handfasted unto him, as the spiritual spouse of so heavenly a Husband, even flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone (Eph. iv. v.); so that to the faithful believer, what can be lacking unto perfect felicity in such a communion and precious partaking with Christ in all heavenly treasures?

For from him we may fetch abundant fulness to supply our extreme emptiness; we are quick in him as lively branches in the vine-stock; we are made alive unto God in him, as members of the body do live by the head; and we are by faith in him, accepted as his dear spouse; and in this matrimonial bond and covenant he hath made with us a most happy exchange; he hath taken unto him what we brought, and giveth us all that is his, be it ever so precious, so entirely he loved us. Thus we are made rich in him, as many as thus know him, and thus do believe him to be ours.

And blessed be that heavenly Father, who hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hath revealed the same unto his chosen little ones, (Luke x.) who with holy Paul do count all things but loss, and do judge them but dung, for the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord, to win him, and to be found in him, not having righteousness of themselves, but the righteousness which cometh of God through faith in Christ, in knowing him and the virtue of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his passion, to be conformable unto his death, whereby to attain the resurrection from death. (Phil. iii.) This, this is that treasure hid in the field whereof is spoken Matt. xiii.; the which a man findeth and hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. This is that precious pearl, &c.

Now even as the conceiving of this communion and fellowship which we have with Christ, bringeth such peace as passeth all understanding, so, as I said, the christian knitting of faithful believers in this Christ's mystical body, is, unto those that understand, a joyful joining and enjoying, and a profitable fruition one of another, as in the body one member thereof ministereth unto another, thereby taking comfort one in another, whereof St. Paul most lively and comfortably speaks in the fourth chapter to the Ephesians, which words are above-mentioned. The bond of this compacting and knitting of us together is love; for even as our Head, Christ, by his unmeasurable mercy and unspeakable love towards us, doth assure himself unto us to be one with us, we being in him and he in us; so this love is by his Spirit poured into our hearts, whereby we are taught, that the faithful believers, as they are in number many, so are they in Christ many members, making but one body.

And hereof ensues the careful compassion and cheerful rejoicing of one for another, as occasion requires. Hereof proceeds not only a thankfulness unto God for his graces received, but also a continual perseverance in praying, one for another, thereby to purchase the mutual partaking of his manifold blessings needful for us. And finally, hereby is wrought in us a lively feeling of a spiritual welfare, even as in the body one member is the better for the welfare of the other; and thus much hereof, which, as I do not amplify as an idle speculation without some practice of the same, so must I confess, that I am far from that feeling

which I ought and also would have thereof. Notwithstanding, I yield most humble thanks unto my God, who hath practised me in some comfortable unfeigned experience of the same; and as I somewhat have felt, so I somewhat have spoken. (2 Cor. iv.) And yet the rather do I rejoice to enlarge herein unto you, my dear christian friend, good mistress Harrington, for that I do well know, that you have drunk of the Holy Spirit with others, unto whom the knowledge hereof seemeth not foolishness, as it doth unto worldlings, but is indeed the wisdom of God, and the high power of God to save all them that believe it. And because I do esteem you as one of the members belonging unto that mystical body, I do with no small comfort many times remember you, giving God thanks for you, and daily do I by name remember you in my prayers; yea, and also your family, that you may in the fear of God consider your great charge; and that the rather by your abiding in the true reverend fear of God, they whom you have charge of, may be virtuously transformed into the same. Amen. Amen.

I doubt not but that you have learned the lesson of St. Paul unto his Timothy, Have faith and a good conscience; the which while some have put from them, they have made shipwreck of their faith. (1 Tim. i.) I know I shall not need to bid you fly from idolatry, yea, that most detestable idol of the mass. The Lord minister unto you right understanding in all things, and pray, pray, and for me also, for I know I both have and shall fare the better for your prayer. I can tell you by experience, that our Christ is even the sweet Saviour that we have taken him to be, and he will be the helper at an extreme pinch. Oh! how sweet is He unto them that will be the simple sheep of his pasture! They can say with the faith of David, (Psal. xxiii.) The Lord is my Shepherd, and I shall lack nothing, &c. I can be joyful in him, I thank him therefore and I thank you for your remembrance of me, whereof I understand by your letters unto master James Haddon.* I would not refuse the blessing of your benevolence, in ministering unto my necessity, if my case so required; but I thank God, I am not as yet in any need, therefore be not you therein careful. And for this time no more but pray, pray, and I pray that good God, even our own God, to

* A learned and good man, dean of Exeter, and exile for the truth.

keep you always. Amen. In haste, the 21st of November 1553, a prisoner in the Lord.

Yours, as you know,

L. Saunders.

LETTER VII.

To mistress Lucy Harrington, a godly gentlewoman, and friendly to him in his troubles.

Your most gentle commendations, whereof this messenger made remembrance unto me, were for two causes very comfortable. First, for that thereby I understood of the state of your health and bodily welfare, for the which I give thanks unto God, who grant the long continuance thereof to his honour and fatherly good will, whereunto I will daily say, Amen. And further, I was refreshed by the expressing of your mindful friendship towards me, far unworthy thereof. Wherein I take occasion of much rejoicing in our so gracious a God and merciful Father, who as he hath in his unmeasureable mercy, by faith, handfasted us his chosen children unto his dear Son our Christ, as the spiritual spouse of such a heavenly husband, so he linketh us by love one unto another, being by that bond compacted together, with charitable readiness to do good one to another; so that first to the glory of our God, and his Christ, then to our own joying in the testimony of a good conscience, and last of all to the stopping of the mouths and confusion of our adversaries, we bear the badge as the right spouse of our Christ, which he himself noted in this saying, Herein shall all men know that ye be my disciples, if ye love one another. John xiii.

Then, further, by this bond of mutual love is set forth the fatherly providence of God toward us his children, that though it is he that careth for us, in whom we live, move, and be; who feedeth all flesh with bodily sustenance; yet hath he appointed us in these present necessities to stand in his stead, one unto another; wherein is not only set forth our dignity, but also that unspeakable accord and unity among us, the many members in his mystical body. And though that, either for lack of ability, or else through distance of place, power and opportunity of helping one another do fail, yet wonderful is the working of God's

children, through the Spirit of prayer, as thereby they fetch all heavenly influence from Christ their celestial head, by his Spirit to be measured severally, as may serve to the maintenance of the whole body.

Thus does our faithful prayer, which we make one for another, distribute and scatter God's bountiful blessings both spiritual and bodily, when ordinary ability lacketh, and when the arm may not reach such God's riches. According hereunto I well perceive and understand your readiness to do good unto all; and especially I have experience of your ready good will towards me, in your hearty desire to stretch out your helping hand to relieve my lack; and of your help to be extended to me in the other spiritual sort, by your good prayer, I doubt not; as I also therein assure you of my help, being all that I may do, and yet the same not so much as I would do.

My need concerning bodily necessaries is as yet furnished by God's provision; so that I am not driven to any extremity wherefore to be burdensome to you, as your gentle benevolence invites me, the Lord reward you therefore. If God make me worthy to be his witness at this present, in giving this corruptible body to burn for the testimony of his truth; it is enough for me to say to you that I have a poor wife and child, whom I love in the Lord, and whom I know you will tender for my sake, when I am departed hence.

To be short, I say unto you, as I say unto myself, Rejoice in the Lord, cast your care on him, for he careth for us, &c.; and according to the time present, let us with our Christ, and all his dear disciples; let us with him, I say, weep awhile, that we may rejoice with him everlastingly. Let us consider of what sort of people they were whom St. John by revelation did behold in the heavenly bliss and everlasting joy. These are they, said the angel unto him, (Rev. vii.) which came out of great tribulation, and made their garments white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore are they in the presence of the seat of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and He that sitteth in the seat will dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst; neither shall the sun light on them, neither any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the seat shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Though we sow in sorrow we shall

reap in great joy, and for this hope's sake we seek the things above, and forsake the things present.

I beseech you give most hearty salutations unto my good lady Fitzwilliams, unto whom I wish, as to you and to myself, all good things. The grace of God be always with you, and that good family. Amen.

LETTER VIII.

Another letter to mistress Lucy Harrington.

Grace and mercy, &c. It happens oftentimes that abundance of matter brings with it much vehemence of friendly affection, making men dumb; and even then chiefly when there is most eager purpose of speaking, silence doth suppress, and cause the party so affected, imperfectly to express what he goes about to utter. Such impediment, by much matter mingled with fervency of affection, I feel sometimes in myself, hindering the utterance, either by tongue or writing, of the abundance of the heart. The love of our most gracious God and heavenly Father bestowed upon us in the merits of his Christ our Saviour, who can by conception of mind comprehend? It passes, indeed, all understanding; much less may the same by any means be expressly uttered.

And as such heavenly blessings, which by faith we fetch from above, are inexplicable, so is it hard to utter, when the faithful are set on fire by love, their readiness to reach forth and to give by charity, as by faith they have received. But, alas! we carry this treasure in earthen vessels; many times faith is feeble, and then love loses her fervour; pray we, therefore, O Lord increase our faith, and love forthwith will be on fire. And immortal thanks be given unto our God, who in our Christ hath bestowed upon us the first fruits of his Spirit, who crieth in our hearts, Abba, Father, (Rom. viii.) And, as St. Paul saith, (2 Cor. iv.) Seeing we have the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore I have spoken, we also believe, and therefore we speak. Yea, God knoweth, this Spirit puts in us a mind to speak, but in attempting thereof we are driven with Moses to say, O Lord, I am slow mouthed, and of uncircumcised lips; and with Jeremiah, O Lord, I cannot speak.

Albeit that this infancy restraineth the opening of such abundance of heart in my tender christian duty to be declared towards you, yet I beseech you, let this be settled in your understanding, that as St. Paul expresses unto his Corinthians, that they were in his heart either to live or to die, with many other such sayings uttered unto them, and to the Galatians, expressing as vehement affection towards them; so in some part I would be like affected towards all God's children, and especially towards you, whom I know in Christ, and to whom I will not say how much I am indebted. I thank you for your great friendship and tender good will towards my wife; yea, that good gracious God recompense you, who may worthily with the more countervail you for the same, and fulfil that which lacketh of thankful duty in us.

And because of that which heretofore I have conceived of you, and of your more than natural love towards me and mine, I make myself thus bold to lay this burden upon you, even the care and charge of my said poor wife I mean, to be unto her a mother and mistress, to rule and direct her by your discreet counsel. I know she conceiveth of you the same that I do, and is thankful unto God with me for such a friend; and therefore I beseech you, even for Christ's sake, put never from you this friendly charge over her, whether I live longer, or shortly depart. But to charge you otherwise, thanks be to God, neither I, neither she, have any such extreme need; if we had, I would be as bold with you as mine own mother. I beseech you, give my hearty salutations unto master Fitzwilliams, and my good lady, with thanks also for my poor wife and child. The Lord recompense them.

L. Saunders.

LETTER IX.

A letter written to a certain backslider from the truth of God's word, which he had both professed and taught.

In mine own name and in the name of many others, your old familiars and acquaintance, I do write unto you in heaviness of heart, for that we have heard of your fall. Oh! how much better had it been for you never to have set your hand to the plough, than negligently to look back;

yea, and foolishly to follow the plough that tilleth not God's field, but turneth up the roots of that seed, which in times past you yourself have sown. Alas! how foolish a builder were you, that would enterprise to build upon the rock Christ, seeing in yourself not only the lack of those things which are required to the finishing of that work, but also the lack of a will to have them; as appears by that you go about to overthrow that little which you seemed to have mightily builded upon that rock. How foolish a virgin have you declared yourself to be, which have gone forth to meet the bridegroom, and tarried so long for his coming, not having oil in store, but are now driven, when you hear the voice of the forerunner, to seek at them that sell! You banquetted with the children of the bridegroom, so long as he was with us; but now he is gone, you leave us alone to fast! You were contented to be fed at Christ's hand with the five thousand; but when he willeth you not to seek the meat that perisheth, you depart! The children of Israel were much to be blamed, for that they desired to be in Egypt again, and yet was their lack and labour then more in the desert than yours now in London.

Alas! wretched man, what hath caused thee thus to cast away thyself, once knowing the truth, and to take in hand to be a minister in antichrist's church? Art thou so soon weary of the heavenly manna, and so ready to return to thy old vomit again? We thought thou hadst been so clean escaped through the word of grace, that thou hadst been a worthy man; to be a comfort to them that stand, a succour to the weak, and a help to them that fall; and art thou now rolled in thy filthy puddle again, and art become a helper to put others into the same? Oh! more than damnable doings, the forgiveness whereof far passes the hope of man! And were it not that things impossible to man are possible with God, we should utterly despair of thy return.

But, knowing that with God there is no impossibility, we will not only advertize thee to remember from whence thou art fallen, that thou mayest seek to rise again; but we will also pray that He, to whom thy return is possible, will vouchsafe of his infinite mercies to work it in thee. Thou hast with Judas sold thy most loving and gentle Master; repent thee with Peter, and no doubt thou shalt find mercy.

To fall, is a thing annexed to the corrupt nature of man;

but to lie still in the filthy puddle of perdition, is to despise God, the Author and first Maker of nature. To fall into the darkness of error, is a point of man's ignorance; but to walk on still in darkness, is to love darkness more than light. To wink at the brightness of the sun, is a weakness of the eyes; but to fly the light, is to be of the night. To leave the rough way that leadeth unto life, and to walk in the pleasant way that leadeth unto perdition, is to love this life; but not to leave that way when we are warned, is to despise the life to come. Briefly, to leave the good things undone, that God commands, and to do that evil which he forbids, is to deserve everlasting damnation at his hand, who rewards every man according to his works; but not to repent of that evil when God calls by his means, is to kindle the wrath of God against the impenitent and obstinate sinner.

Lest you therefore should be found a despiser of God, the Author of nature; a lover of darkness more than light; not of the day, but altogether of the night; a lover of this life, and a hater of the life to come; and finally, such a one as would kindle the wrath of God against you; repent, and come again to Christ. Remember what joy there is in heaven among the angels at the conversion of a sinner. Forget not thy merciful Spouse, who would not cast off the adulterous Israel, and married her to himself.

Be mindful of that loving Lord, who hath said, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he convert and live; and in what day soever the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will remember his iniquity no more, Ezek. xviii. What should separate us from the love of this Lord? What should make us to fly from this our Captain? Should the weariness of an arm? should the lack of such things as the fancy would have? Better it were for us to enter into life with weary arms and thin cheeks, than with lovely countenances and lusty limbs to be cast into hell fire. Make not provision for the flesh with the loss of your soul. Believe Him who hath promised all things necessary to them that seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He hath not at any time deceived you, why then should you seek such shameful shifts to make provision for the flesh?

Have not you yourself had experience of the care that he takes for them that put their trust in him? And now, why are you fallen from him, for the belly's sake?

This have I written to call you back again, if you be not clean gone out of the way; but if you be so given over to error, that you think light to be darkness, and darkness to be light; good to be evil, and evil to be good; Christ to be Belial, and Belial to be Christ; the temple of God to be the synagogue of Satan, and the synagogue of Satan to be the temple of God; then I have nothing to say unto you, but the Lord confound both you and all such. But with God's grace we trust to hear better of you.*

The 20th of September, 1554.

LETTER X.

A letter to his Wife.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Christ our Lord. Entirely beloved wife, even as unto mine own soul and body, so do I daily in my hearty prayer wish unto you, for I do daily twice at the least in this sort remember you; and I do not doubt, dear wife, but both I and you, as we are written in the book of life, so we shall together enjoy the same everlastingly, through the grace and mercy of God, our dear Father, in his Son our Christ. And, for this present life, let us wholly appoint ourselves to the will of our good God, to glorify him either by life or by death; and even that same merciful Lord make us worthy to honour him either way as pleaseth him. Amen.

I am joyful, I thank my God and my Christ, in whom and through whom I shall, I know, be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crown which is laid up in store for me, and all the true soldiers of Christ. Wherefore, wife, let us, in the name of our God, fight lustily to overcome the flesh, the devil, and the world. What our harness and weapons should be in this kind of fight, look in the sixth chapter unto the Ephesians, and pray, pray, pray. I would that you would make no suit for me in any wise. Thank, you know whom, for his most sweet and comfortable putting me in remembrance of my journey whither I am passing. God send us all good speed, and a joyful meeting. I have too few such

* This letter is thought of some, albeit not certainly known, to be written by M. Saunders. *Coverdale.*

friends to further me in that journey, which is indeed the gréatest friendship. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

A prisoner in the Lord,

L. Saunders.

LETTER XI.

To his Wife.

Grace, mercy, and peace, &c. Dear wife, even that our merciful God and most loving Father, whom we call upon daily, and of whose mercies we daily taste, and who will be a most tender Father unto all them which heartily turn unto him, believe in him, and cast their care upon him, that our good God, I say, even for his Son our sweet Christ's sake, be your helper and keeper. Amen, Amen.

And now you see his goodness towards you by many ways, provoking you to embrace him as your only God, and only comfort. He is more ready mercifully to receive you than you can be ready to run unto him for help. He saith by his prophet, I will favour them even as a father doth favour his child that offendeth. And in another place, Is it possible that a mother can forget her child which she hath borne? If she be forgetful, yet will not I forget thee. Thus saith he unto all such as unfeignedly seek him. You are in the Lord's bonds, and in his blessed tuition, I do not doubt. Commend yourself, and that which he hath given you, unto his merciful and blessed will, and so do I, and shall do, by his goodness. Exercise yourself in the comfortable remembrance of God's manifold and merciful promises. Put him in remembrance of the same by frequent prayer, and put your whole trust in him, who for his name's sake, his promise sake, and for his Christ's sake, will do what is best for you. Commend me to all the godly there. Send me word in any wise if you lack. Take heed that you be no more chargeable unto them at whose house you are, than you shall fully content them; in any wise God keep you.

L. S.

LETTER XII.

To his Wife, and other of his dear friends and lovers in the Lord.

Grace and comfort in Christ Jesus, our only comfort in all extreme assaults. Amen.

Fain would this flesh make strange of that which the spirit doth embrace. Oh how loth is this loitering sluggard, to pass forth in God's path! It fantasies forsooth much fear of fray-bugs,* and were it not for the force of faith which pulls it forward by the bridle of God's most sweet promise, and of hope which pricketh on behind, great danger there were of fainting by the way. But blessed, and everlastingly blessed, be that heavenly Father of ours, who in his Christ, our sufficient Saviour, hath vouchsafed so to shine in our hearts, that he gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and having this treasure in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be God's, and not ours, we are, according to his good will, troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift; we are in poverty, but yet not without that which is sufficient; we suffer persecution, but are not forsaken therein; we are cast down, nevertheless we perish not; we bear in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might also appear in our bodies. 2 Cor. iv.

Wherefore, by the grace of our Christ, we shall not be wearied, neither be dismayed by this our probation through the fire of affliction, as though some strange thing had happened unto us, but by his power we shall rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's passion, that when he doth appear, we may be joyful and glad, knowing that our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepareth an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory unto us, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. (2 Cor. iv.) They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy; for he that goeth on his way, weeping and scattering his good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his whole sheaves with him. (Psa. cxxvi.) Then, then, shall the Lord wipe away all tears from our eyes; then, then, shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up

* Vain terrors

in victory; Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Yea, thanks be to God, which hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the mean season, it remains for us to follow St. Peter's bidding: Let them, saith he (1 Peter iv.), that are troubled, according to the will of God, commit their souls to him with well doing, as a faithful Creator and Maker. He is our Maker, we are his handywork and creatures, whom now, when he hath made, he doth not leave and forsake, as the shipwright doth the ship, leaving it at all adventures to be tossed in the tempest; but he comforts us his creatures, and in him we live, move, and have our being; yea, not only that, but now that he hath in his dear Christ repaired us, being before utterly decayed, and redeemed us, purging us unto himself as a peculiar people by the blood of his Son, he hath put on a most tender good will and fatherly affection towards us, never to forget us, unto whom by sure promises he hath plighted such faith, that though it were possible that the mother could forget her infant, and not be tender-hearted to the child of her womb, yet it may not be that his faithful believers should be forgotten of him. Isa. xlix.

He bids us to cast our care on him, and saith, that assuredly he careth for us (1 Pet. v.); and what though for a season he suffers us to be turmoiled in the troublous tempests of temptation, and seems as in much anger to have given us over and forgotten us, let not us, for all that, leave off to put our trust in him, but let us with godly Job conclude in ourselves and say, Even though he kill me, yet will I put my trust in him. (Job xiii.) Let us with the blessed Abraham hope, even contrary to hope; by belief lean unto that our loving Lord, who though for our probation he suffers us to be afflicted, and proved for a season, yet will he not be always chiding, neither keepeth he his anger for ever; for he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but dust. (Psa. ciii.) Wherefore, look, how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. Look, how wide the east is from the west, so far hath he set our sins from us; yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him. Oh! what great cause of rejoicing have we therefore in our most gracious God! We cannot but burst forth in the praising of such a bountiful Benefactor, and say with the same psalmist, Praise

the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Dear wife, riches I have none to leave behind me, wherewith to endow you after the worldly manner. But that treasure of tasting how sweet Christ is unto hungry consciences, whereof I thank my Christ I do feel part, and would feel more, that I bequeath unto you, and to the rest of my friends, to all you I say, that love me in the Lord, to retain the same in sense of heart always. Pray, pray. I am merry,* and I trust I shall be merry, in spite of all the devils in hell. I utterly refuse myself, and resign myself unto my Christ, in whom I know I shall be strong, as he seeth needful. Pray, pray, pray.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.†

LETTER XIII.

Another letter to his Wife, with a certain remembrance to master Harrington and master Hurland.‡

Grace and comfort, &c. Wife, you shall do best not to

* Joyful.

† As the said master Saunders was in prison, strait charge was given to the keeper, that no person should speak with him. His wife yet came to the prison-gate, with her young child in her arms, to visit her husband. The keeper, though for his charge he durst not suffer her to come into the prison, yet he took the little babe out of her arms, and brought him unto his father. Lawrence Saunders, seeing him, rejoiced greatly, saying, he rejoiced more to have such a boy, than he should if two thousand pounds were given him. And unto the standers by, who praised the goodliness of the child, he said, "What man, fearing God, would not lose his life present, rather than by prolonging it here, he should adjudge this boy to be a bastard, his wife a harlot, and himself a whoremonger? Yea, if there were no other cause, for which a man of my estate should lose his life, yet who would not give it to avouch this child to be legitimate, and his marriage to be lawful and holy?"

I do, good reader, recite this saying, not only to let thee see what he thought of priests' marriage, but chiefly to let all married couples and parents learn to bear in their bosoms true affections; natural, but yet seasoned with the true salt of the Spirit, unfeignedly and thoroughly mortified to do the natural works and offices of married couples and true parents, so long as with their doing they may keep Christ with a free confessing faith, and in conscience unsoiled; otherwise both they and their own lives are to be forsaken, as Christ required them to be denied, and given in his cause. *Fox.*

‡ As touching his fatherly care and affection to his wife and his little child, the same is lively set forth in another letter which he wrote to his wife, wherein he admonished her that she should not resort much to the prison where he was, for danger of trouble that might ensue; the tenour of which letter here follows. *Fox.*

come often unto the grating where the porter may see you. Put not yourself in danger where it needs not; you shall, I think, shortly come far enough into danger by keeping faith and a good conscience, which, dear wife, I trust you do not slack to make reckoning and account upon, by exercising your inward man in meditation of God's most holy word, being the sustenance of the soul, and also by giving yourself to humble prayer; for these two things are the very means how to be made members of our Christ, meet to inherit his kingdom.

Do this, dear wife, in earnest, and not leaving off; and so we two shall with our Christ and all his chosen children enjoy the world of happiness in that everlasting immortality; whereas, here will nothing else be found but extreme misery, even of those who most greedily seek this worldly wealth; and so, if we two continue God's children, graffed in our Christ, the same God's blessing which we receive, shall also settle upon our Samuel; though we do shortly depart hence, and leave the poor infant, to our seeming, at all adventures; yet shall he have our gracious God to be his God; for so He hath said, and he cannot lie; I will be thy God, said he, and the God of thy seed; yea, if you leave him in the wild wilderness destitute of all help, being called of God to do his will, either to die for the confession of Christ, or any work of obedience, that God who heard the cry of the poor infant of Hagar, Sarah's handmaiden, and did succour it, will do the like to the child of you or any other, fearing him and putting your trust in him.

And if we lack faith, as we do indeed many times, let us call for it, and we shall have the increase both of it and also of any other good grace needful for us, and rejoice in God, in whom also I am very joyful. O Lord, what great cause of rejoicing have we to think upon that kingdom, which he vouchsafes for his Christ's sake freely to give us, forsaking ourselves and following him. Dear wife, this is truly to follow him, even to take up our cross, and follow him; and then, as we suffer with him, so shall we reign with him everlastingly. Amen. Shortly, shortly. Amen.

My dear friends, master Harrington and master Hurland, pray, pray, and be joyful in God; and I beseech you as you may, let the good brethren abroad be put in mind of our dear tried brethren and sisters, who have, the Lord be praised, made known their constancy in confessing the truth, to the glory of God, and comfort, I doubt not,

of his church abroad. Thus have they sown spiritual things, confessing Christ. I trust they will not be forgetful that they may reap of those who are of ability and at liberty, their carnal things. Hereof I speak now, because of my tender desire towards these dear brethren here now in bonds, and in other places, and also that I doubt whether I may have wherewith to write hereafter. The keeper saith he must needs see that we write not at all. The devil roareth, but be of good cheer; he will shortly be trodden under foot, and the rather by the blood of martyrs. Salute, in my most hearty manner, good mistress Harrington, and my good lady F. I am theirs as long as I live, and pray for them. Desire them to do likewise for me, and for all us sheep appointed to the slaughter.

A prisoner in the Lord, LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

LETTER XIV.

To his Wife, M. Harrington, M. Hurland, &c.

Grace and comfort, &c. Dear wife, rejoice in our gracious God, and his and our Christ, and give thanks most humbly and heartily to him for this day's work; that in any part I, most unworthy wretch, should be made worthy to bear witness unto his everlasting verity, which antichrist with his, by main force, I perceive, and by most impudent pride and boasting, will go about to suppress. Remember God alway, my dear wife, and so shall God's blessing light upon you and our Samuel. O remember alway my words, for Christ's sake; be joyful, and grudge not against God, and pray, pray. We all are joyful here, thanks be unto our God, who in his Christ hath given us great cause to be joyful, by whom he hath prepared for us such a kingdom, and doth and will give unto us some little taste thereof even in this life, and to all such as are desirous to take it. Blessed, saith our Christ, be they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for such shall be satisfied. Let us go, yea, let us run to seek such treasure, and that with whole purpose of heart, to cleave unto the Lord, to find such riches in his heavenly word, through his Spirit, obtained by prayer.

My dear friends and brethren, master Harrington and master Hurland, pray, pray. The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak. When I look upon myself, being astonished and confounded, what have I else to say, but those words of Peter, Lord, go from me, for I am a sinful man. (Luke v.)

But then feel I that sweet comfort, The word of the Lord is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, and this is my comfort in my trouble. (Psa. cxix.) Then am I bold with the same Peter to say, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. (John vi.) This comfort have I when the Giver thereof doth give it. But I look for battles, which the root of unfaithfulness, which I feel in me, will most eagerly give unto my conscience, when we come once to the combat. We are, I expect, within the sound of the trump of our enemies. Play, ye that are abroad, the part of Moses, praying in all places, lifting up pure hands, and God's people shall prevail (1 Tim. ii.); yea, our blood shall be their perdition, who do most triumphantly spill it; and we, then being in the hands of our God, shall shine in his kingdom, shall stand in great steadfastness against those who have dealt extremely with us. And when these our enemies shall thus see us, they shall be vexed with horrible fear, and shall wonder at the hastiness of the sudden health, and shall say with themselves, having inward sorrow and mourning for very anguish of mind, These are they whom we sometimes had in derision, and jested upon; we fools thought their lives to be madness, and their end to be without honour; but, lo! how they are accounted among the children of God. The blessing of God be with you all. Salute, I pray you, my sister B. S., with others our friends in the same house; God's grace keep them with all the rest of our godly acquaintance, lovers of the truth and furtherers of the true confession of the same, all whom I bid most heartily to be joyful in the Lord, rejoicing in hope, preparing themselves to be patient in tribulation with continuance in prayer. Let somebody buy for me a pencil of lead to write with, for I shall hardly have pen and ink here, since all liberty of writing is taken away from us.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

LETTER XV.

A letter written to his wife, and others of the faithful, after his condemnation to the fire; written the last of January, 1555, *out of the Compter in Bread-street.*

Grace in Christ, with the consolation of the Holy Ghost, to the keeping of faith and a good conscience, confirm and keep you for ever vessels to God's glory! Amen.

Oh! what worthy thanks can be given to our gracious God, for his unmeasurable mercies plentifully poured upon us! And I, most unworthy wretch, cannot but pour forth at this present, even from the bottom of my heart, the bewailing of my great ingratitude and unkindness towards so gracious a God and loving a Lord. I beseech you all, as for my other many sins, so especially for that sin of my unthankfulness against God, crave pardon for me in your earnest prayers, commending me to God's mercy in Christ.

To stand to number these mercies in particular, were to number the drops in the sea, the sands on the shore, the stars in the sky. O, my dear wife, and ye, the rest of my friends that love me in the Lord, rejoice with me; rejoice, I say, with thanksgiving, for this my present promotion; in that I am made worthy to magnify my God, not only in my life, by my slow mouth and uncircumcised lips bearing witness unto his truth; but also by my blood to seal the same, to the glory of God, and confirming of his church. And as yet I testify unto you, that comfort in my sweet Christ doth drive from my thoughts the fear of death.

But if my dear husband, Christ, do for my trial leave me alone unto myself, alas! I know in what case I shall be then; but if for my proof he do so, yet I am sure he will not be long or far from me. Though he stand behind the wall and hide himself, as Solomon says in his mystical ballad, (Cant. ii.) yet will he peep in by a cleft to see how I do. He is so tender-hearted a Joseph, that though he speak roughly to his brethren, and handle them hardly; yea, and threatens grievous bondage to his best beloved brother, Benjamin, yet he cannot contain himself from weeping with us, and upon us, with falling on our necks and sweetly kissing us. Such, such a brother, is our Christ unto us all; wherefore hasten to go unto him, as Jacob did, with his sons and family, leaving their own country and acquaintance. Yea, this our Joseph hath obtained for us his brethren, that Pharaoh the infidel shall minister unto us chariots wherein at ease we may be carried to come unto him; as we have had experience how our very adversaries do help us unto our everlasting bliss by their speedy despatch; yea, and how all things have been helpings unto us, blessed be our God! Be not afraid o fray-bugs which lie by the way; fear, rather, the everlasting fire; fear the serpent which hath a sting, and that is this bodily death they shall be brought to taste who are not

grafted in Christ, wanting faith and a good conscience, and so are not acquainted with Christ the killer of death.

But, oh! my dear wife and friends, we, we whom God hath delivered from the power of darkness, and hath translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, by putting off the old man, and by faith putting on the new, even our Lord Jesus Christ, his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and redemption—we, I say, have to triumph against the terrible spiteful serpent the devil, sin, hell, death, and damnation. For Christ our brazen serpent hath pulled away the sting of this serpent, so that now we may boldly, in beholding the serpent, this bodily death, spoiled of his sting, triumph, and with our Christ and all his elect say, O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xv.

Wherefore be joyful, my dear wife, and all my dear fellow-heirs of the everlasting kingdom. Always remember the Lord; rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; continue in prayer, and pray for us now appointed to the slaughter, that we may be unto our heavenly Father a fat offering and an acceptable sacrifice. I may hardly write to you, wherefore let these few words be a witness of commendation to you, and all those who love us in the faith; and namely unto my flock, among whom I am now resident by God's providence, but as a prisoner.

And although I am not so among them as I have been, to preach to them out of a pulpit, yet doth God now preach unto them by me, by this my imprisonment and captivity, which now I suffer among them for Christ's gospel's sake, bidding them to beware of the Romish antichristian religion and kingdom, requiring and charging them to abide in the truth of Christ, which is shortly to be sealed with the blood of their pastor; who though he be unworthy of such a ministry, yet Christ, their high Pastor, is to be regarded; whose truth hath been taught them by me, is witnessed by my chains, and by his power shall be by my death also, through the power of that high Pastor. Be not careful, good wife; cast your care upon the Lord, and commend me unto him in repentant prayer, as I do you, and our Samuel, whom even at the stake I will offer, as myself, unto God. Fare ye well all in Christ,* in hope

* To this his flock he wrote also a fruitful letter, exhorting and charging them to beware of the Romish religion, which is not yet come to light. *Letters of the Martyrs.*

to be joined with you in joy everlasting. This hope is put up in my bosom. Amen, amen. Pray, pray.

LETTER XVI.

To his Wife a little before his burning.

Grace and comfort in Christ. Amen. Dear wife, rejoice in the mercies of our Christ, and ye also my dear friends. Pray, pray for us every body. We are shortly to be despatched hence unto our good Christ. Amen. Amen. Wife, I would you sent me my shirt, which you know whereunto it is consecrated. Let it be sewed down on both sides, and not open.* Oh! my heavenly Father, look upon me in the face of thy Christ, or else I shall not be able to abide thy countenance, such is my filthiness. He will do so, and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, death, hell, and damnation can do against me. O wife, always remember the Lord. God bless you, yea, he will bless thee, good wife, and thy poor boy also; only cleave thou unto him, and he will give thee all things. Pray, pray, pray.

LETTER XVII.

To Robert and John Glover, written the morning that he was burnt.

Grace and consolation in our sweet Saviour Christ. Oh! my dear brethren, whom I love in the Lord, being loved of you also in the Lord, be merry and rejoice for me, now ready to go up to that mine inheritance; which I myself indeed am most unworthy of, but my dear Christ is worthy, who hath purchased the same for me with so dear a price. Make haste, my dear brethren, to come unto me, that we may rejoice with that joy, which no man shall take from us. Oh! wretched sinner that I am, not thankful unto this my Father, who hath vouched me worthy to be a vessel unto his honour. But, O Lord, now accept my thanks, though they proceed out of a not-enough-circumcised heart.

Salute my good sisters, your wives; and, good sisters, fear the Lord. Salute all others that love us in the truth. God's blessing be with you always. Amen. Even now towards the offering of a burnt sacrifice, O my Christ, help, or else I perish. LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

* The martyrs usually had shirts prepared expressly for their burning.

THE HISTORY

OF

DR. ROWLAND TAYLOR,

Of Hadley in Suffolk.

WHO, BY HIS DEATH AND MARTYRDOM THERE, WITNESSED AND CONFIRMED THAT DOCTRINE WHICH HE HAD BEFORE MOST PAINFULLY AND FAITHFULLY TAUGHT.

A. D. 1555.

THE HISTORY

OF

DR. ROWLAND TAYLOR.*

From the Acts and Monuments of John Fox.

The town of Hadley was one of the first that received the word of God in all England, at the preaching of master Thomas Bilney; by whose industry the gospel of Christ had such gracious success, and took such root there, that a great number in that parish became exceedingly well learned in the holy scriptures, as well women as men; so that a man might have found many among them that had often read the whole bible through, and who could have said a great part of St. Paul's epistles by heart, and very well and readily have given a godly learned sentence in any matter of controversy. Their children and servants were also brought up and trained so diligently in the right knowledge of God's word, that the whole town seemed rather a university of the learned, than a town of cloth-making or labouring people. And what most is to be commended, they were for the more part faithful followers of God's word in their living.

In this town Dr. Rowland Taylor, doctor in both the civil and canon laws, and a right perfect divine, was parson. Who at his first entering into his benefice did

* Strype, speaking of Dr. Taylor, says, "He was one of the chaplains of archbishop Cranmer, and an extraordinary man, both for his learning, as well as his bold and brave profession of Christ's religion, even to the fiery trial. He had read over, which was rare in those days, all Augustine's works, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, Eusebius, Origen, and divers other fathers. He professed the civil law, and had read over the canon law also. He was much employed in ecclesiastical affairs in the reign of Edward the sixth." Dr. Taylor was a native of Rothbury, in Northumberland; he was of the university of Cambridge, where the conversation of Dr. Turner, and the preaching of Latimer, proved to be the means of his conversion. The narrative of his sufferings, which is here faithfully reprinted, is one of the most affecting and interesting pieces connected with the history of the British reformation.

not, as the common sort of beneficed men do, let out his benefice to a farmer, who should gather up the profits, and set in an ignorant unlearned priest to serve the cure, and so that they may have the fleece, little or nothing care for feeding the flock: but, contrarily, he forsook the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, with whom he before was in household, and made his personal abode and dwelling in Hadley among the people committed to his charge. Where he as a good shepherd, abiding and dwelling among his sheep, gave himself wholly to the study of holy scriptures, most faithfully endeavouring himself to fulfil that charge which the Lord gave unto Peter, saying, Peter, lovest thou me? feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep. This love of Christ so wrought in him, that no Sunday nor holyday passed, nor other time when he might get the people together, but he preached to them the word of God, the doctrine of their salvation.

Not only was his word a preaching unto them, but all his life and conversation was an example of unfeigned christian life and true holiness. He was void of all pride, humble and meek as any child; so that none were so poor, but they might resort unto him boldly, as unto their father, neither was his lowliness childish or fearful, but as occasion, time, and place required, he would be stout in rebuking the sinful and evil doers, so that none was so rich but he would tell him plainly his fault, with such earnest and grave rebukes as became a good curate and pastor. He was a man very mild, void of all rancour, grudge, or evil will, ready to do good to all men, readily forgiving his enemies, and never sought to do evil to any.

To the poor that were blind, lame, sick, bedrid, or that had many children, he was a very father, a careful patron, and diligent provider, insomuch that he caused the parishioners to make a general provision for them;* and he himself, besides the continual relief that they always found at his house, gave an honest portion yearly to the common alms box. His wife also was an honest, discreet, and sober matron, and his children well nurtured, brought up in the fear of God and good learning.

To conclude, he was a right and lively image or pattern of all those virtuous qualities described by St. Paul in a true bishop; good salt of the earth, savourily biting the corrupt manners of evil men; a light in God's house set

* The poor laws had not then been enacted.

upon a candlestick for all good men to imitate and follow. Thus continued this good shepherd among his flock, governing and leading them through the wilderness of this wicked world, all the days of the most innocent and holy king of blessed memory, Edward the sixth. But after it pleased God to take king Edward from this vale of misery unto his most blessed rest, the papists, who ever sembled and dissembled, both with king Henry the eighth, and with king Edward his son, now seeing the time convenient for their purpose, uttered their false hypocrisy, openly refusing all the good reformation made by the said two kings; and contrary to that which they had in these two kings' days preached, taught, written, and sworn, they violently overthrew the true doctrine of the gospel, and persecuted with sword and fire all those that would not agree to receive again the Roman bishop as supreme head of the universal church, and allow all the errors, superstitions, and idolatries, that before by God's word were disproved and justly condemned, as though now they were good doctrine, virtuous, and true religion.

In the beginning of this rage of antichrist, a certain petty gentleman, after the sort of a lawyer, called Foster, being a steward and keeper of courts, a man of no great skill, but a bitter persecutor in those days, with one John Clerk, of Hadley, which Foster had ever been a secret favourer of all Romish idolatry, conspired with the said Clerk to bring in the pope and his maumetry* again into Hadley church. For as yet Dr. Taylor, as a good shepherd, had retained and kept in his church the godly church service and reformation made by king Edward, and most faithfully and earnestly preached against the popish corruptions, which had infected the whole country round about.

Therefore the aforesaid Foster and Clerk hired one John Averth, parson of Aldam, a very money mammonist,† a blind leader of the blind, a popish idolater, and an open adulterer and whoremonger, a very fit minister for their purpose, to come to Hadley, and there to begin again the popish mass. To this purpose they builded up the altar with all haste possible, intending to bring in their mass again about Palm Monday. But this their device took no effect; for in the night the altar was beaten down. Wherefore they built it up again the second time, and laid diligent watch, lest any should again break it down.

* Idolatry. † A covetous man.

On the day following came Foster and John Clerk, bringing with them their popish sacrificer, who brought with him all his implements and garments, to play his popish pageant, whom they and their men guarded with swords and bucklers, lest any man should disturb him in his missal sacrifice.

When Dr. Taylor, who, according to his custom, sat at his book studying the word of God, heard the bells ring, he arose and went into the church, supposing that something had been there to be done, according to his pastoral office. Coming to the church, he found the church doors shut and fast barred, saving the chancel door, which was only latched. Where he entering in, and coming into the chancel, saw a popish sacrificer in his robes, with a broad new shaven crown, ready to begin his popish sacrifice, beset round about with drawn swords and bucklers, lest any man should approach to disturb him.

Then said Dr. Taylor, Thou devil, who made thee so bold to enter into this church of Christ, to profane and defile it with this abominable idolatry? With that started up Foster, and with an ireful and furious countenance said to Dr. Taylor, Thou traitor, what doest thou here, to hinder and disturb the queen's proceedings? Dr. Taylor answered, I am no traitor, but I am the shepherd that God my Lord Christ hath appointed to feed this his flock: wherefore I have good authority to be here: and I command thee, thou popish wolf, in the name of God, to avoid hence, and not to presume here to poison Christ's flock with such popish idolatry.

Then said Foster, Wilt thou, traitorly heretic, make a commotion, and resist violently the queen's proceedings?

Doctor Taylor answered: I make no commotion, but it is you, papists, that make commotions and tumults. I resist only with God's word against your popish idolatries, which are against God's word, the queen's honour, and tend to the utter subversion of this realm of England. And further, thou doest against the canon law, which commands that no mass be said but at a consecrate altar.

When the parson of Aldam heard that, he began to shrink back, and would have left his saying of mass: then started up John Clerk, and said, M. Averth, be not afraid, you have a superaltar.* Go forth with your business, man.

* A superaltar is a stone consecrated by the bishops, commonly of a foot long, which the papists carry instead of an altar when they say mass for money in gentlemen's houses. *Fox.*

Then Foster, with his armed men, took Dr. Taylor, and led him with strong hand out of the church, and the popish prelate proceeded in his Romish idolatry. Dr. Taylor's wife, who followed her husband into the church, when she saw her husband thus violently thrust out of his church, kneeled down and held up her hands, and with a loud voice said, I beseech God the righteous Judge to avenge this injury that this popish idolater this day doth to the blood of Christ. Then they thrust her out of the church also, and shut the doors, for they feared that the people would have rent their sacrificer in pieces. Notwithstanding, one or two threw in great stones at the windows, and missed very little the popish masser.

Thus you see how without consent of the people, the popish mass was again set up, with battle array, with swords and bucklers, with violence and tyranny; which practice the papists have ever yet used. As for reason, law, or scripture, they have none on their part. Therefore they are the same that saith, The law of unrighteousness is our strength: come, let us oppress the righteous without any fear, &c.

Within a day or two after, with all haste possible, this Foster and Clerk made a complaint of Dr. Taylor, by a letter written to Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and lord chancellor. When the bishop heard this, he sent a letter missive to Dr. Taylor, commanding him within certain days, to come and appear before him upon his allegiance, to answer such complaints as were made against him.

When Dr. Taylor's friends heard of this, they were exceeding sorry and grieved in mind; foreseeing to what end the same matter would come, seeing also that all truth and justice were trodden under foot, and that falsehood with cruel tyranny were set aloft and ruled all the whole rout. His friends, I say, came to him, and earnestly counselled him to depart and fly, alleging and declaring unto him that he could neither be indifferently heard to speak his conscience and mind, nor yet look for justice or favour at the said chancellor's hands, who as it was well known, was most fierce and cruel; but must needs, if he went up to him, wait for imprisonment and cruel death at his hands.

Then said Dr. Taylor to his friends, Dear friends, I most heartily thank you that you have so tender a care over me. And although I know that there is neither justice nor truth to be looked for at my adversaries' hands,

but rather imprisonment and cruel death ; yet know I my cause to be so good and righteous, and the truth so strong upon my side, that I will, by God's grace, go and appear before them, and to their beards resist their false doings.

Then said his friends, M. Doctor, we think it not best so to do. You have sufficiently done your duty, and testified the truth, both by your godly sermons, and also in resisting the parson of Aldam, with others, that came hither to bring in again the popish mass. And forasmuch as our Saviour Christ willeth and biddeth us, that when they persecute us in one city, we should flee into another ; we think in flying at this time ye should do best, keeping yourself against another time when the church shall have great need of such diligent teachers and godly pastors.

Oh, said Dr. Taylor, what will ye have me to do? I am now old, and have already lived too long, to see these terrible and most wicked days. Do you fly, and do as your consciences lead you. I am fully determined, with God's grace, to go to the bishop, and to his beard to tell him that he doeth naught. God shall well hereafter raise up teachers of his people, who shall with much more diligence and fruit teach them than I have done. For God will not forsake his church, though now for a time he trieth and correcteth us, and not without a just cause. As for me, I believe before God, I shall never be able to do God so good service, as I may do now ; nor shall I ever have so glorious a calling, as I now have, nor so great mercy of God proffered me, as is now at this present. For what christian man would not gladly die against the pope and his adherents? I know that the papacy is the kingdom of antichrist, altogether full of lies, altogether full of falsehood, so that all their doctrine, even from Christ's cross be my speed,* and St. Nicholas, unto the end of their apocalypse, is nothing but idolatry, superstition, errors, hypocrisy, and lies. Wherefore I beseech you and all other my friends, to pray for me, and I doubt not but God will give me strength and his Holy Spirit, that all mine adversaries shall have shame of their doings.

When his friends saw him so constant, and fully determined to go, they with weeping eyes commended him

* The horn-book or child's spelling alphabet. St. Nicholas was the patron saint of children ; his picture was sometimes prefixed to their books. The words here referred to by Dr. Taylor, were the usual invocation of children when commencing their learning.

unto God; and he within a day or two prepared himself to his journey, leaving his cure with a godly old priest, named sir Richard Yeoman, who afterwards, for God's truth, was burnt at Norwich.* There was also in Hadley one Alcock, a very godly man, well learned in the holy scriptures, who, after sir Richard Yeoman was driven away, used daily to read a chapter, and to say the English litany in Hadley church. But him they took up to London, and cast him in prison in Newgate: where after a year's imprisonment he died.

But let us return to Dr. Taylor again, who being accompanied with a servant of his own, named John Hull, took his journey towards London. By the way, this John Hull laboured to counsel and persuade him very earnestly to flee, and not to come to the bishop, and proffered himself to go with him to serve him; and in all perils to venture his life for him and with him. But in no wise would Dr. Taylor consent or agree thereunto, but said, Oh! John, shall I give place to this thy counsel and worldly persuasion, and leave my flock in this danger? Remember the good Shepherd, Christ, who not only fed his flock, but also died for his flock. Him must I follow, and with God's grace I will do so. Therefore, good John, pray for me, and if thou seest me weak at any time, comfort me, and discourage me not in this my godly enterprise and purpose.

Thus they came up to London, and shortly after Dr. Taylor presented himself to the bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, then lord chancellor of England.

For this hath been one great abuse in England these many years, that such offices as have been of most importance and weight, have commonly been committed to bishops and other spiritual men, whereby three mischiefs and inconveniences have happened in this realm, to the great dishonour of God, and utter neglecting of the flock of Christ: the which three are these.—First, They have had small leisure to attend to their pastoral cures, which thereby have been utterly neglected and left undone. Secondly, It hath also puffed up many bishops and other spiritual persons into such haughtiness and pride, that they have thought no nobleman in the realm worthy to be their

* The narrative of Yeoman's sufferings as given by Fox is very interesting. After travelling about as a pedlar for some time, he returned to Hadley, where he was concealed in a chamber in the guildhall more than a year. Being discovered at length he was condemned to the fire.

equal and fellow. Thirdly, Where they by this means knew the very secrets of princes, they being in such high offices, have caused the same to be known in Rome, before the kings could accomplish and bring their intents to pass in England. By this means hath the papacy been so maintained, and things ordered after their wills and pleasures, that much mischief hath happened in this realm and others, sometime to the destruction of princes, and sometime to the utter undoing of many commonwealths.

Now when Gardiner saw Dr. Taylor, he, according to his common custom, reviled him, calling him knave, traitor, heretic, with many other villainous reproaches: all which Dr. Taylor heard patiently, and at the last said unto him: My lord, I am neither traitor nor heretic, but a true subject, and a faithful christian man, and am come according to your commandment, to know what is the cause that your lordship hath sent for me.

Then said the bishop, Art thou come, thou villain? How darest thou look me in the face for shame? Knowest thou not who I am? Yes, said Dr. Taylor, I know who you are. You are doctor Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and lord chancellor, and yet but a mortal man, I trow. But if I should be afraid of your lordly looks, why fear you not God, the Lord of us all? How dare you for shame look any christian man in the face, seeing you have forsaken the truth, denied our Saviour Christ and his word, and done contrary to your own oath and writing? With what countenance will you appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and answer to your oath made first unto king Henry the eighth, of famous memory, and afterward unto blessed king Edward the sixth, his son?

The bishop answered, Tush, tush, that was Herod's oath, unlawful, and therefore worthy to be broken. I have done well in breaking it: and, I thank God, I am come home again to our mother, the catholic church of Rome, and so I would thou shouldest do.

Dr. Taylor answered, Should I forsake the church of Christ, which is founded upon the true foundation of the apostles and prophets, to approve those lies, errors, superstitions, and idolatries, which the popes and their company at this day so blasphemously do approve? Nay, God forbid. Let the pope and his, return to our Saviour Christ and his word, and thrust out of the churches such abominable idolatries as he maintaineth, and then will christian

men turn unto him. You wrote truly against him, and were sworn against him.

I tell thee, said the bishop of Winchester, it was Herod's oath, unlawful, and therefore ought to be broken and not kept: our holy father the pope hath discharged me of it.

Then said Dr. Taylor, But you shall not so be discharged before Christ, who doubtless will require it at your hands, as a lawful oath made to your liege and sovereign lord the king, from whose obedience no man can assoil you, neither the pope nor none of his.

I see, quoth the bishop, thou art an arrogant knave, and a very fool.

My lord, quoth Dr. Taylor, leave your unseemly railing at me, which is not seemly for such a one in authority, as you are. For I am a christian man, and you know that he that saith to his brother, Racha, is in danger of a council, and he that saith, Thou fool, is in danger of hell fire.

The bishop answered, Ye are false, and liars all of you. Nay, quoth Dr. Taylor, we are true men, and know that it is written, The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul. And again, Lord God thou shalt destroy all that speak lies. And therefore we abide by the truth of God's word, which you, contrary to your own consciences, deny and forsake.

Thou art married, said the bishop.—Yea, said Dr. Taylor, that, I thank God, I am, and have had nine children, and all in lawful matrimony, and blessed be God that ordained matrimony, and commanded that every man that hath not the gift of continency should marry a wife of his own, and not live in adultery or whoredom.

Then said the bishop, Thou hast resisted the queen's proceedings, and wouldest not suffer the parson of Aldam, a very virtuous and devout priest, to say mass in Hadley. Dr. Taylor answered, My lord, I am parson of Hadley, and it is against all right, conscience, and laws, that any man shall come into my charge and presume to infect the flock committed unto me, with venom of the popish idolatrous mass.

With that the bishop waxed very angry, and said, Thou art a blasphemous heretic indeed, that blasphemest the blessed sacrament, (and he put off his cap,) and speakest against the holy mass, which is made a sacrifice for the quick and the dead. Dr. Taylor answered, Nay, I blaspheme not the blessed sacrament which Christ instituted, but I reverence it as a true christian man ought to do, and

confess that Christ ordained the holy communion in remembrance of his death and passion, which when we keep according to his ordinance, we, through faith, eat the body of Christ, and drink his blood, giving thanks for our redemption, and this is our sacrifice for the quick and the dead, to give God thanks for his merciful goodness showed to us, in that he gave his Son Christ unto the death for us.

Thou sayest well, quoth the bishop, It is all that thou hast said, and more too; for it is a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead. Then answered Dr. Taylor, Christ gave himself to die for our redemption upon the cross, whose body there offered was the propitiatory sacrifice, full, perfect, and sufficient unto salvation, for all them that believe in him. And this sacrifice our Saviour Christ offered in his own person, himself, once for all, neither can any priest any more offer him, nor do we need any more propitiatory sacrifice, and therefore I say with Chrysostom, and all the doctors, Our sacrifice is only memorative, in the remembrance of Christ's death and passion, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and therefore the fathers called it Eucharistia; and none other sacrifice hath the church of God.

It is true, quoth the bishop, the sacrament is called Eucharist, a thanksgiving, because we there give thanks for our redemption; and it is also a sacrifice propitiatory for the quick and the dead, which thou shalt confess ere thou and I have done. Then the bishop called his men, and said, Have this fellow hence, and carry him to the King's Bench, and charge the keeper he be straitly kept.

Then kneeled Dr. Taylor down, and held up both his hands, and said, Good Lord, I thank thee; and from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable errors, idolatries, and abominations, good Lord deliver us: and God be praised for good king Edward. So they carried him to prison, to the King's Bench, where he lay prisoner near two years.

This is the sum of that first talk, as I saw it mentioned in a letter that Dr. Taylor wrote to a friend of his, thanking God for his grace, that he had confessed his truth, and was found worthy for truth to suffer prison and bonds, beseeching his friends to pray for him, that he might persevere constant unto the end.

Being in prison, Dr. Taylor spent all his time in prayer, reading the holy scriptures, and writing, and preaching,

and exhorting the prisoners and such as resorted to him, to repentance and amendment of life.

Within a few days after, divers other learned and godly men, in sundry counties of England, were committed to prison for religion, so that almost all the prisons in England were become right christian schools and churches; so that there was no greater comfort for christian hearts, than to come to the prisons, to behold their virtuous conversation, and to hear their prayers, preachings, most godly exhortations, and consolations.* Now were placed in churches blind and ignorant massmongers with their Latin babblings and apish ceremonies; who like cruel wolves spared not to murder all such as but once whispered against their popery. As for the godly preachers which were in king Edward's time, they were either fled the realm, or else, as the prophets in king Ahab's days, they were privily kept in corners. As for as many as the papists could lay hold on, they were sent unto prison, there as lambs waiting when the butchers would call them to the slaughter.

When Dr. Taylor was come into the prison called the King's Bench, he found therein the virtuous and vigilant preacher of God's word, M. Bradford; who for his innocent and godly living, his devout and virtuous preaching, was worthily counted a miracle of our times, as even his adversaries must needs confess. Finding this man in prison, he began to exhort him to faith, strength, and patience, and to persevere constant unto the end. M. Bradford hearing this, thanked God that he had provided him such a comfortable prison-fellow, and so they both together lauded God, and continued in prayer, reading, and exhorting one the other. Insomuch that Dr. Taylor told his friends that came to visit him, that God had most graciously provided for him, to send him to that prison

* George Marsh, the martyr, relates, that when imprisoned at Lancaster, "They threatened and rebuked me for my preaching to the people out of the prison, as they called it, and for my praying and reading so loud that the people in the streets might hear. The truth is, I, and my prison-fellow, Warburton, every day, kneeling on our knees, read morning and evening prayer, with the English litany every day twice, both before noon and after, with other prayers more; and also read every day certain chapters of the bible, commonly towards night. And we read all these things with so high and loud a voice, that the people without in the streets might hear us, and would oftentimes, namely in the evenings, come and sit down in our sight under the windows, and hear us read, wherewith others being offended, complained." *Fox.*

where he found such an angel of God, to be in his company to comfort him.

After Dr. Taylor had lain in prison awhile, he was cited to appear in the arches at Bow church, to answer unto such matter as there should be objected against him. At the day appointed he was led thither, his keeper waiting upon him. Where, when he came, he stoutly and strongly defended his marriage, affirming by the scriptures of God, by the doctors of the primitive church, by both laws civil and canon, that it is lawful for priests to marry, and that such as have not the gift of continency, are bound on pain of damnation to marry. This did he so plainly prove, that the judge could give no sentence of divorce against him, but gave sentence he should be deprived of his benefice because he was married.

You do me wrong then, said Dr. Taylor; and alleged many laws and constitutions for himself, but all prevailed not. For he was again carried into prison, and his livings taken away, and given to others. As for Hadley benefice, it was given or sold, I know not which, to one master Newall, whose great virtues were altogether unlike to Dr. Taylor his predecessor, as the poor parishioners full well have proved.

After a year and three quarters, or thereabout, in which time the papists got certain old tyrannous laws, which were put down by king Henry the eighth, and by king Edward, to be again revived by parliament; so that now they might, ex officio, cite whom they would, upon their own suspicion, and charge them with what articles they pleased, and except they in all things agreed to their purpose, burn them; when these laws were once established, they sent for Dr. Taylor with certain other prisoners, who were again summoned before the chancellor and other commissioners, about the 22d of January, 1555. The purport and effect of which talk between them, because it is sufficiently described by himself in his own letter written to a friend of his, I have annexed as here follows.

A letter of Dr. Taylor, containing and reporting the talk had between him and the lord chancellor and other commissioners, the 22d of January, 1555.

Whereas you would have me write the talk between the king and queen's most honourable council and me on Tuesday, the 22d of January, this, so far as I remember, was the effect

thereof. First my lord chancellor said, You among others are at this time sent for to enjoy the king's and the queen's majesty's favour and mercy, if you will now rise again with us from the fall which we generally have received in this realm, from which, God be praised, we are now clearly delivered, miraculously. If you will not rise with us now, and receive mercy now offered, you shall have judgment according to your demerits. To this I answered, that so to rise should be the greatest fall that ever I could receive, for I should so fall from my dear Saviour Christ to antichrist. For I do believe that the religion set forth in king Edward's days, was according to the vein of the holy scripture, which contains fully all the rules of our christian religion, from which I do not intend to decline, so long as I live, by God's grace.

Then master secretary Bourne said, Which of the religions mean ye of king Edward's days? for you know there were divers books of religion set forth in his days. There was a religion set forth in a catechism by my lord of Canterbury.* Do you mean that you will stick to that?

I answered, My lord of Canterbury made a catechism to be translated into English; which book was not of his own making, yet he set it forth in his own name, and truly that book for the time did much good. But there was after that set forth by the most innocent king Edward, for whom God be praised everlastingly, the whole church service, with great deliberation, and the advice of the best learned men of the realm, and authorised by the whole parliament, and received and published gladly by the whole realm, which book was never reformed but once, and yet by that one reformation it was so fully perfected, according to the rules of our religion in every behalf, that no christian conscience could be offended with any thing therein contained; I mean of that book reformed.

Then my lord chancellor said, Didst thou never read the book that I set forth of the sacrament?

I answered that I had read it.

Then he said, How likest thou that book? With that one of the council, whose name I know not, said, My lord, that is a good question; for I am sure, that book stoppeth all their mouths. Then said I, My lord, I think many things are far wide from the truth of God's word in that book.

Then my lord said, Thou art a very varlet. To that I

* The catechism of 1548. See Cranmer's writings.

answered, That is as ill as Racha, or Thou fool. Then my lord said, Thou art an ignorant beetle brow.*

To that I answered, I have read over and over again the holy scriptures, and Augustine's works through, Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, with divers other books throughout; therefore I thank God I am not utterly ignorant. Besides these, my lord, I professed the civil law, as your lordship did, and I have read over the canon law also.

Then my lord said, Thou readest all things with a corrupt judgment; touching my profession, it is divinity, in which I have written divers books. Then I said, My lord, you did write one book, De vera obedientia,† I would you had been constant in that; for indeed you never declared a good conscience that I heard of, but in that one book.

Then my lord said, Tut, tut, tut, I wrote against Bucer in priests' marriages; but such books please not such wretches as thou art, who hast been married many years. To that I answered, I am married indeed, and I have had nine children in holy matrimony, I thank God. And this I am sure of, that your proceedings now at this present, in this realm, against priests' marriages is the maintenance of the doctrine of devils, against natural law, civil law, canon law, general councils, canons of the apostles, ancient doctors, and God's laws.

Then spake my lord of Durham, saying, You have professed the civil law, as you say. Then you know that Justinian writes, that priests should at their taking of orders swear that they were never married; and to prove that he brings in the canons of the apostles.

To that I answered, I did not remember any such law of Justinian. But I am sure that Justinian writes in Titulo de indicta viduitate, that if one would bequeath to his wife in his testament a legacy, under a condition that she should never marry again, and take an oath of her for accomplishing the same, yet she may marry again if he die, notwithstanding the aforesaid conditions and oath taken and made against marriage; and an oath is another manner of obligation made to God, than is a papistical vow made to man. Moreover, in the pandects it is contained, that if a man manumits his handmaid under a condition

* A person having prominent eyebrows was called so.

† A book written by Gardiner, "Of true Obedience," in which he taught of the king's supremacy. *Fox.*

that she shall never marry; yet she may marry, and her patron shall lose his power over her, for his adding of the unnatural and unlawful condition against matrimony.

Then my lord chancellor said, Thou sayest that priests may be married by God's law. How provest thou that?

I answered, by the plain words and sentences of St. Paul, both to Timothy and to Titus, where he speaks most evidently of the marriage of priests, deacons, and bishops. And Chrysostom, writing upon the epistle to Timothy, saith, It is a heresy to say that a bishop may not be married.

Then said my lord chancellor, Thou liest of Chrysostom. But thou doest, as all thy companions do, belie ever, without shame, both the scriptures and the doctors. Didst thou not say, that by the canon law, priests may be married? which is most untrue, and the contrary is most true.

I answered, We read in the decrees, that the four general councils, Nicene, Constantinopolitan, Ephesine, Chalcedon, have the same authority that the four evangelists have. And we read in the same decrees, which is one of the chief books of the canon law, that the council of Nice, by the means of one Paphnutius, did allow priests and bishops' marriages. Therefore by the best part of the canon law, priests may be married.

Then my lord chancellor said, Thou falsifiest the general council. For there is express mention in the said decree, that priests who are married should be divorced from their wives. Then said I, If those words be there, as you say, then am I content to lose this great head of mine. Let the book be fetched.

Then spake my lord of Durham, Though they be not there, yet they may be in the ecclesiastical history which Eusebius wrote, out of which the decree was taken.

To that said I, It is not likely that the pope would leave out any such sentence, having such authority, and making so much for his purpose. Then my lord chancellor said, Gratian was but a patcher, and thou art glad to snatch up such a patch as makes for thy purpose. I answered, My lord, I cannot but marvel that you call one of the chief papists that ever was, but a patcher!*

Then my lord chancellor said, Nay, I call thee a snatcher and a patcher: to make an end, wilt thou not return again

* Gratian was a celebrated Benedictine monk of the twelfth century, to whose writings the popes were chiefly indebted for the high authority they exercised in the following centuries.

with us to the catholic church? And with that he rose. And I said, by God's grace I will never depart from Christ's church. Then I required that I might have some of my friends to come to me in prison; and my lord chancellor said, Thou shalt have judgment within this week. And so was I delivered again unto my keeper. My lord of Durham would that I should believe as my father and my mother did. I alleged Augustine, that we ought to prefer God's word before all men.

And thus much was contained in the letter of Dr. Taylor for that matter. Besides this letter, moreover he directed another writing in like manner to another friend of his concerning the causes wherefore he was condemned.*

A brief recapitulation out of Dr. Taylor's causes aforetouched, for the reader more evidently to see how the papists act against their own knowledge in forbidding priests' marriage.

The pope's clergy forbidding ecclesiastical persons to marry, do against their conscience and knowledge, as may well be proved by these causes hereunder following.

1. They know that matrimony in the old testament, is permitted to all men, alike, without any exception.

2. They know that in the old testament both priests, levites, prophets, patriarchs, and all others, had wives.

3. They know that matrimony was permitted and instituted of God for two principal ends; namely, for the having of children, and avoiding of sin.

4. They know that in the old testament, God not only instituted and permitted matrimony to be free, but also induces and appoints men to marry and take wives, in these words, It is not good for a man to be alone, &c.

5. They know that in the new testament St. Paul permits the state of matrimony to be free to all men, not having the gift of continency, and forbids none.

6. They know that in the new testament St. Paul not only permits, but also expressly wills and charges men having not the gift, to marry.

7. They know that in the new testament the said St. Paul not only permits and commands, but also commends

* The other letter is given in Fox's Acts and Monuments. The substance is given in the recapitulation which follows.

and praises the state of matrimony ; (Heb. xiii.) calling it honourable, and the bed to be undefiled, &c.

8. They know that in the new testament Christ himself, not only was not conceived nor born of the virgin before she was espoused in matrimony, but also that both he and his blessed mother did beautify and honour the state of matrimony with their presence ; yea, in the same he began his first miracle.

9. They know both by the old testament and new, that marriage is no impediment to walk in the obedience of God's commandment. For Abraham carried into the land of Canaan his old, yea, and barren wife, the virtuous woman Sarah with him ; and also to Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and others, their marriage was no impediment to them to walk with God ; neither to other levites, bishops, and priests, in the time both of the old testament and of the new. Again, neither was it a hindrance to Peter, Philip, and others, both to have their wives with them, and also to supply the office of apostleship.

10. They know both by the old testament and new, that sinful fornication and adultery deprives man of God's favour and graces of the Holy Ghost, which graces especially are requisite in men of the church.

11. They know in their own secret conscience, and by experience, that neither they which enjoin this vow of chastity, nor they which take it, observe the vow of chastity. Whereupon rise inconveniences more than can be expressed : but the Lord above knows all, besides the secret murders peradventure of many a poor infant, &c.

12. They know by Cyprian, (Epist. 11,) and Augustine, (lib. de bono conjugali ad Julianum,) that a vow is no impediment sufficient to hinder matrimony, or to divorce the same.

13. They know that Chrysostom affirms it is a heresy to say that a bishop may not have a wife.

14. They know that Ambrose, (xxxii. q. 1. Integritas,) will have no commandment, but counsel only, to be given touching the observing of virginity.

15. They know that before the time of pope Hildebrand, that is, during the time of one thousand years after Christ, marriage was never restrained by any forcible necessity of vow from men of the church.

16. They know that St. Paul calls it the doctrine of devils to forbid meats and marriage, which God hath

left free with thanksgiving for necessity of man and woman.

Dr. Taylor concluded his letter in these words :—" God be praised, since my condemnation I never was afraid to die. God's will be done. If I shrink from God's truth, I am sure of another manner of death than had judge Hales. But, God be praised, even from the bottom of my heart I am unmovably settled upon the Rock, nothing doubting but that my God will perform and finish the work that he hath begun in me and others. To him be all honour, both now and ever, through Christ our only and whole Saviour. Amen."

After that Dr. Taylor thus with great spirit and courage had answered for himself, and stoutly rebuked his adversaries for breaking their oath made before to king Henry and to king Edward, his son, and for betraying the realm into the power of the Roman bishop, they perceiving that in no case he could be stirred to their wills and purpose, that is, to turn with them from Christ to antichrist, committed him thereupon to prison again, where he remained till the last of January.

Dr. Taylor the fourth time, with M. Bradford and M. Saunders, brought before Winchester and other bishops.

On the last day of January, 1555, Dr. Taylor and M. Bradford, and M. Saunders, were again called to appear before the bishops of Winchester, Norwich, London, Salisbury, and Durham, and there were charged again with heresy and schism, and therefore a determinate answer was required, whether they would submit themselves to the Roman bishop and abjure their errors, or else they would, according to their laws, proceed to their condemnation.

When Dr. Taylor and his fellows, M. Bradford and M. Saunders, heard this, they answered stoutly and boldly, that they would not depart from the truth which they had preached in king Edward's days, neither would they submit themselves to the Romish antichrist; but they thanked God for so great mercy, that he would call them to be worthy to suffer for his word and truth.

When the bishops saw them so boldly, constantly, and immovably fixed in the truth, they read the sentence of death upon them, which when they had heard, they most joyfully gave God thanks, and stoutly said unto the

bishops, We doubt not but God the righteous judge, will require our blood at your hands, and the proudest of you all shall repent this receiving again of antichrist, and your tyranny that ye now show against the flock of Christ. So was Dr. Taylor condemned and committed to the Clink, and the keepers charged straitly to keep him. For ye have now another manner of charge, said the lord chancellor, than ye had before; therefore look ye take heed to it.

When the keeper brought him towards the prison, the people flocked about to gaze upon him; unto whom he said, God be praised good people, I am come away from them undefiled, and will confirm the truth with my blood. So was he bestowed in the Clink till it was toward night, and then he was removed to the Compter by the Poultry.

When Dr. Taylor had laid in the said Compter in the Poultry a few days a prisoner, on the fourth day of February, Edmond Bonner bishop of London, with others, came to the said Compter to degrade him, bringing with them such ornaments as appertain to their massing mummery. Now being come, he called for the said Dr. Taylor to be brought unto him, the bishop being then in the chamber where the keeper of the Compter and his wife lay. So Dr. Taylor was brought down from the chamber above that, to the said Bonner. And at his coming, the bishop said, Master doctor, I would you would remember yourself, and turn to your mother holy church; so may you do well enough, and I will sue for your pardon. Whereunto master Taylor answered, I would you and your fellows would turn to Christ. As for me I will not turn to antichrist. Well, said the bishop, I am come to degrade you: wherefore, put on these vestures. No, quoth Dr. Taylor, I will not. Wilt thou not? said the bishop. I shall make thee, ere I go. Quoth Dr. Taylor, You shall not, by the grace of God. Then he charged him upon his obedience to do it, but he would not do it for him. So he willed another to put them on his back; and when Dr. Taylor was thoroughly furnished therewith, he set his hands by his sides, walking up and down, and said, How say you, my lord, am I not a goodly fool? How say you my masters; If I were in Cheap,* should I not have boys enough to laugh at these apish toys, and toying trumpery? So the bishop scraped his fingers, thumbs, and the crown of his head, and did the rest of such like devilish observances.

* Cheapside.

At the last, when he should have given Dr. Taylor a stroke on the breast with his crosier staff, the bishop's chaplain said; My lord, strike him not, for he will sure strike again. Yea by St. Peter will I, quoth Dr. Taylor, laughing at his fear. The cause is Christ's, and I were no good christian if I would not fight in my master's quarrel. So the bishop laid his curse upon him, but struck him not. Then Dr. Taylor said; Though you do curse me, yet God doth bless me. I have the witness of my conscience, that ye have done me wrong and violence; and yet I pray God, if it be his will, forgive you. But from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us. And in going up to his chamber, he still said; God deliver me from you, God deliver me from you. And when he came up, he told master Bradford, for then both lay in one chamber, that he had made the bishop of London afraid: For, saith he laughingly, his chaplain gave him counsel not to strike me with his crosier staff, for that I would strike again; and, said he, rubbing his hands, I made him believe I would do so indeed.

The night after that he was degraded, his wife and his son Thomas resorted to him, and were by the gentleness of the keepers permitted to sup with him. For this difference was ever found between the keepers of the bishop's prisons, and the keepers of the king's prisons; that the bishops' keepers were ever cruel, blasphemous, and tyrannous, like their masters; but the keepers of the king's prisons showed, for the most part, as much favour as they possibly might. So came Dr. Taylor's wife, his son, and John Hull his servant, to sup with him; and at their coming in before supper, they kneeled down and prayed, saying the litany.

After supper, walking up and down, he gave God thanks for his grace, who had so called him and given him strength to abide by his holy word; and turning to his son Thomas: My dear son, said he, almighty God bless thee, and give thee his Holy Spirit, to be a true servant of Christ, to learn his word, and constantly to stand by his truth all thy life long. And my son, see that thou fear God always. Flee from all sin, and wicked living; be virtuous, serve God with daily prayer, and apply to thy book. In any wise see thou be obedient to thy mother, love her, and serve her; be ruled by her now in thy youth, and follow her good counsel in all things. Beware of wicked company, of

young men that fear not God, but follow their wicked lusts and vain appetites. Flee from whoredom, and hate all filthy living, remembering that I thy father do die in the defence of holy marriage. Another day when God shall bless thee, love and cherish the poor people, and count that thy chief riches is to be rich in alms; and when thy mother is waxed old, forsake her not, but provide for her according to thy power, and see that she lack nothing. For so will God bless thee, and give thee long life upon earth and prosperity: which I pray God to grant thee.

Then turning to his wife; My dear wife, said he, continue steadfast in the fear and love of God; keep yourself undefiled from their popish idolatries and superstitions. I have been unto you a faithful yokefellow, and so have you been unto me, for the which I pray God to reward you, and doubt you not, dear wife, but God will reward it. Now the time is come that I shall be taken from you, and you discharged of the wedlock bond towards me; therefore I will give you my counsel what I think most expedient for you. It will be most convenient for you to marry. For doubtless you shall never be at a convenient stay for yourself and our poor children, nor out of trouble, till you are married. Therefore as soon as God will provide it, marry with some honest, faithful man who fears God. Doubt you not, God will provide an honest husband for you, and he will be a merciful father to you and to my children; whom I pray you, bring up in the fear of God, and in learning, to the uttermost of your power, and keep them from this Romish idolatry. When he had thus said, they with weeping tears talked together, and kissed one the other; and he gave to his wife a book of the church service, set out by king Edward, which in the time of his imprisonment he daily used. And unto his son Thomas he gave a Latin book, containing the notable sayings of the old martyrs, gathered out of the ecclesiastical histories; and in the end he wrote his testament and last farewell, as here follows.

The last will and testament of doctor Rowland Taylor, parson of Hadley.

I say to my wife, and to my children; The Lord gave you unto me, and the Lord hath taken me from you, and you from me; blessed be the name of the Lord. I believe that they are blessed which die in the Lord. God careth for sparrows, and for the hairs of our heads. I

have ever found him more faithful and favourable than any father or husband. Trust ye therefore in him by the means of our dear Saviour Christ's merits; believe, love, fear, and obey him; pray to him, for he hath promised to help. Count me not dead, for I shall certainly live, and never die. I go before, and you shall follow after, to our long home. I go to the rest of my children, Susan, George, Ellen, Robert, and Zachary. I have bequeathed you to the only Omnipotent.

I say to my dear friends of Hadley, and to all others who have heard me preach; that I depart hence with a quiet conscience, as touching my doctrine; for which I pray you thank God with me. For I have, after my little talent, declared to others, those lessons which I gathered out of God's book, the blessed bible. Therefore if I or an angel from heaven should preach to you any other gospel, than that ye have received, God's great curse upon that preacher.

Beware for God's sake, that ye deny not God, neither decline from the word of faith, lest God decline from you, and so ye everlastingly perish. For God's sake beware of popery, for though it appear to have in it unity, yet the same is in vanity, and antichristianity, and not in Christ's faith and verity.

Beware of the sin against the Holy Ghost, now after such a light opened so plainly and simply, truly, throughly, and generally to all England.

The Lord grant all men his good and Holy Spirit, increase of his wisdom, increase of contemning the wicked world, increase of hearty desire to be with God, and the heavenly company, through Jesus Christ our only Mediator, Advocate, Righteousness, Life, Sanctification, and Hope. Amen, Amen. Pray, Pray.

ROWLAND TAYLOR departing hence in sure hope, without all doubting of eternal salvation, I thank God my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ my certain Saviour. Amen.

The 5th of February, Anno 1555.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? (Psalm xxvii.) God is he that justifieth; who is he that can condemn? (Rom. viii.) In thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded. Psalm xxi.

On the next morrow, after that Dr. Taylor had supped with his wife in the Compter, as is before expressed, which

was the fifth day of February, the sheriff of London, with his officers came to the Compter by two of the clock in the morning, and so brought forth Dr. Taylor, and without any light led him to the Woolsack, an inn without Aldgate. Dr. Taylor's wife suspecting that her husband should that night be carried away, watched all night within St. Botolph's church-porch beside Aldgate, having with her two children, the one named Elizabeth, of fourteen years of age, whom being left without father or mother, Dr. Taylor had brought up of alms from three years old, the other named Mary, Dr. Taylor's own daughter.

Now, when the sheriff and his company came over against St. Botolph's church, Elizabeth cried, saying; O my dear father: mother, mother, here is my father led away. Then cried his wife, Rowland, Rowland, where art thou? for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, Dear wife, I am here, and stayed. The sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the sheriff said; Stay a little masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife, and so they stayed. Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms; and he, his wife, and Elizabeth kneeled down and said the Lord's prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed, he rose up and kissed his wife, and shook her by the hand, and said: Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience. God shall stir up a father for my children. And then he kissed his daughter Mary and said, God bless thee, and make thee his servant: and kissing Elizabeth, he said, God bless thee. I pray you all stand strong and steadfast unto Christ and his word, and keep you from idolatry. Then said his wife; God be with thee, dear Rowland. I will with God's grace meet thee at Hadley.

And so was he led forth to the Woolsack, and his wife followed him. As soon as they came to the Woolsack, he was put into a chamber, where he was kept with four yeomen of the guard and the sheriff's men. Dr. Taylor, as soon as he was come into the chamber, fell down on his knees, and gave himself wholly to prayer. The sheriff then seeing Dr. Taylor's wife there, would in no case grant her to speak any more with her husband, but gently desired her to go to his house and take it as her own, and promised her she should lack nothing, and sent two officers to

conduct her thither. Notwithstanding, she desired to go to her mother's, whither the officers led her, and charged her mother to keep her there till they came again.

Thus remained Dr. Taylor in the Woolsack, kept by the sheriff and his company, till eleven of the clock. At which time the sheriff of Essex was ready to receive him; and so they set him on horseback within the inn, the gates being shut. At the coming out of the gates, John Hull, before spoken of, stood at the rails with Thomas, Dr. Taylor's son; when Dr. Taylor saw them, he called them, saying, Come hither, my son Thomas. And John Hull lifted the child up, and set him on the horse before his father; and Dr. Taylor put off his hat and said to the people that stood there looking on him; Good people, this is mine own son, begotten in lawful matrimony; and God be blessed for lawful matrimony. Then lifted he up his eyes towards heaven, and prayed for his son, laid his hand upon the child's head, and blessed him, and so delivered the child to John Hull, whom he took by the hand, and said; Farewell John Hull, the faithfulest servant that ever man had. So they rode forth, the sheriff of Essex, with four yeomen of the guard, and the sheriff's men leading him.

When they were come almost at Burntwood, one Arthur Faysie, a man of Hadley, who before time had been Dr. Taylor's servant, met them, and he supposing him to have been at liberty, said: Master doctor, I am glad to see you again at liberty, and came to him, and took him by the hand. Soft sir, said the sheriff, he is a prisoner; what hast thou to do with him? I cry you mercy, said Arthur, I knew not so much, and I thought it none offence to talk to a true man. The sheriff was very angry with this, and threatened to carry Arthur with him to prison; notwithstanding, he bade him get him quickly away, and so they rode forth to Burntwood, where they caused to be made for Dr. Taylor a close hood, with two holes for his eyes to look out at, and a slit for his mouth to breathe at. This they did, that no man should know him, nor he speak to any man. Which practice they used also with others. Their own consciences told them that they led innocent lambs to the slaughter. Wherefore they feared, lest if the people should have heard them speak or have seen them, they might have been much more strengthened by their godly exhortations, to stand steadfast in God's word, and to fly the superstitions and idolatries of the papacy.

All the way Dr. Taylor was joyful and merry, as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. He spake many notable things to the sheriff and yeomen of the guard that conducted him, and often moved them to weep, through his much earnest calling upon them to repent, and to amend their evil and wicked living. Oftentimes also he caused them to wonder and rejoice, to see him so constant and steadfast, void of all fear, joyful in heart and glad to die. Of these yeomen, three used Dr. Taylor friendly, but the fourth, whose name was Holmes, used him very homely, unkindly, and churlishly.

At Chelmsford the sheriff of Suffolk met them, there to receive him, and to carry him forth into Suffolk. And being at supper, the sheriff of Essex very earnestly laboured him to return to the popish religion, thinking with fair words to persuade him, and said, Good master doctor, we are right sorry for you, considering what loss is of such a one as ye might be if ye would. God hath given you great learning and wisdom, wherefore ye have been in great favour and reputation in times past with the council and highest of this realm.* Besides this, ye are a man of goodly personage, in your best strength, and by nature like to live many years; and without doubt, ye should in time to come, be in as good reputation as ever you were, or rather better. For you are well beloved of all men, as well for your virtues as for your learning; and methinks it were great pity you should cast away yourself willingly, and so come to such a painful and shameful death. You should do much better to revoke your opinions, and return to the catholic church of Rome, acknowledge the pope's holiness to be the supreme head of the universal church, and reconcile yourself to him. You may do well yet, if you will; doubt you not but you shall find favour at the queen's hands, I and all these your friends will be suitors for your pardon; which no doubt, ye shall obtain. This counsel I give you, good master doctor, of a good heart, and good will toward you; and thereupon I drink to you. In like manner said all the yeomen of the guard; Upon that condition, master doctor, we will all drink to you.

When they had all drunk to him, and the cup was come to him, he stayed a little, as one studying what answer he might give. At the last thus he answered and said;

* Dr. Taylor had been employed repeatedly in public matters of importance.

Master sheriff, and my masters all; I heartily thank you of your good will. I have hearkened to your words and marked well your counsels. And to be plain with you, I do perceive that I have been deceived myself, and am like to deceive a great many of Hadley, of their expectation. With that word they all rejoiced. Yea, good master doctor, quoth the sheriff, God's blessing on your heart: hold you there still. It is the most comfortable word, that we heard you speak yet. What! should you cast away yourself in vain? Play a wise man's part, and I dare warrant it, you shall find favour. Thus they rejoiced very much at the word, and were very merry. At the last, Good master doctor, said the sheriff, what meant you by this, that you said you think you have been deceived yourself, and think you shall deceive many in Hadley? Would you know my meaning plainly, quoth he? Yea, quoth the sheriff, good master doctor, tell it us plainly.

Then said doctor Taylor, I will tell you how I have been deceived, and, as I think, I shall deceive a great many. I am, as you see, a man that hath a very great carcass, which I thought should have been buried in Hadley church-yard, if I had died in my bed, as I well hoped I should have done. But herein I see I was deceived; and there are a great number of worms in Hadley church-yard, which should have had jolly feeding upon this carrion, which they have looked for many a day. But now I know we are deceived, both I and they; for this carcass must be burnt to ashes, and so shall they lose their bait and feeding, which they looked to have had of it!

When the sheriff and his company heard Dr. Taylor say so, they were amazed, and looked one on another, marvelling at the man's constant mind, who thus, without all fear, made but a jest at the cruel torment and death now at hand prepared for him. Thus was their expectation wholly disappointed. And in this appears what was his meditation in his chiefest wealth and prosperity; namely, that he should shortly die and feed worms in his grave; which meditation if all our bishops and spiritual men had used, they had not for a little worldly glory forsaken the word of God and truth, which they in king Edward's days had preached and set forth; nor to maintain the bishop of Rome's authority, have committed so many to the fire as they did.

But let us return to Dr. Taylor, who at Chelmsford was delivered to the sheriff of Suffolk, and by him conducted

to Hadley, where he suffered. When they were come to Lavenham, the sheriff staid there two days; and thither came to him a great number of gentlemen and justices upon great horses, who all were appointed to aid the sheriff. These gentlemen laboured Dr. Taylor very sorely, to reduce him to the Romish religion, promising him his pardon, which, said they, we have here for you. They promised him great promotions, yea a bishopric if he would take it; but all their labour and flattering words were in vain. For he had not built his house upon the sand, in peril of falling at every puff of wind; but upon the sure and unmovable rock, Christ. Wherefore he abode constant and unmovable unto the end.

After two days, the sheriff and his company led Dr. Taylor towards Hadley, and coming within two miles of Hadley, he desired to light off his horse, which done, he leapt, and skipped once or twice as men commonly do in dancing. Why, master doctor, quoth the sheriff, how do you now? He answered: Well, God be praised, good master sheriff. Never better, for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my father's house. But master sheriff, said he, shall not we go through Hadley? Yes, said the sheriff, you shall go through Hadley. Then said he: O good Lord, I thank thee. I shall yet once ere I die see my flock, whom thou, Lord, knowest I have most heartily loved and truly taught. Good Lord, bless them, and keep them steadfast in thy word and truth.

When they were now come to Hadley, and came riding over the bridge, at the bridge foot waited a poor man with five small children; who when he saw Dr. Taylor, he and his children fell down upon their knees, and held up their hands, and cried with a loud voice, and said; O dear father and good shepherd, Dr. Taylor: God help and succour thee, as thou hast many a time succoured me and my poor children. Such witness had the servant of God of his virtuous and charitable alms given in his lifetime. For God would now that the poor should testify of his good deeds, to his singular comfort, to the example of others, and confusion of his persecutors and tyrannous adversaries. For the sheriff and others that led him to death, were wonderfully astonished at this; and the sheriff sorely rebuked the poor man for so crying. The streets of Hadley were beset on both sides the way, with men and

women of the town and country, who waited to see him. When they beheld him so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried, saying one to another, Ah! good Lord, there goeth our good shepherd from us, who so faithfully hath taught us, so fatherly hath cared for us, and so godly hath governed us. O merciful God! what shall we poor scattered lambs do? What shall come of this most wicked world? Good Lord, strengthen him and comfort him; with such other most lamentable and piteous voices. Wherefore the people were sore rebuked by the sheriff and the catchpoles his men, that led him. And Dr. Taylor evermore said to the people; I have preached to you God's word and truth, and am come this day to seal it with my blood.

Coming against the alms-houses, which he well knew, he cast to the poor people money, which remained of what good people had given him in time of his imprisonment. As for his living, they took it from him at his first going to prison, so that he was sustained all the time of his imprisonment by the charitable alms of good people that visited him. Therefore the money that now remained, he put in a glove ready for the same purpose, and, as is said, gave it to the poor almsmen standing at their doors to see him. And coming to the last of the alms-houses, and not seeing the poor that there dwelt ready at their doors, as the others were, he asked; Is the blind man and blind woman that dwelt here alive? It was answered, Yea: they are there within. Then threw he glove and all in at the window, and so rode forth.

Thus this good father and provider for the poor, now took his leave of those, for whom all his life he had a singular care and study. For it was his custom, once in a fortnight at the least, to call upon sir Henry Doyle, and others the rich cloth-makers, to go with him to the alms-houses, and there to see how the poor lived; what they lacked in meat, drink, clothing, bedding, or any other necessaries. The like did he also to other poor men that had many children, or were sick. Then would he exhort and comfort them, and, where he found cause, rebuke the unruly, and what they lacked, that gave he after his power; and what he was not able, he caused the rich and wealthy men to minister unto them. Thus showed he himself in all things an example to his flock, worthy to be followed, and taught by his deed, what a great treasure alms is to all such as cheerfully for Christ's sake do it.

At the last, coming to Aldham Common, the place assigned where he should suffer, and seeing a great multitude of people gathered thither, he asked, What place is this, and what means it that so much people are gathered hither? It was answered: It is Aldham Common, the place where you must suffer; and the people are come to look upon you. Then said he: Thanked be God, I am even at home, and so he lighted from his horse, and with both his hands, rent the hood from his head. Now his hair was knotted evil favouredly, and clipped much like as a man would clip a fool's head; which cost bishop Bonner had bestowed upon him, when he degraded him. But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears, and cried, saying; God save thee, good Dr.Taylor; Jesus Christ strengthen thee, and help thee; the Holy Ghost comfort thee; with such other like godly wishes. Then would he have spoken to the people; but the yeomen of the guard were so busy about him, that as soon as he opened his mouth, one or other thrust a tip-staff into his mouth, and would in no wise permit him to speak. Then desired he licence of the sheriff to speak; but the sheriff denied it to him, and bade him remember his promise to the council.

Well, quoth Dr. Taylor, promise must be kept. What this promise was, it is unknown; but the common fame was, that after he and others were condemned, the council sent for them, and threatened them they would cut their tongues out of their heads, except they would promise that at their deaths they would keep silence and not speak to the people. Wherefore they, desirous to have the use of their tongues, to call upon God as long as they might live, promised silence. For the papists feared much, lest this mutation of religion, from truth to lies, from Christ's ordinances to the popish traditions, should not so quietly have been received as it was, especially this burning of the preachers. They, measuring others' minds by their own, feared lest any tumult or uproar might have been stirred, the people having so just a cause not to be contented with their doings, or else, what they most feared, that the people should have been more confirmed by their godly exhortations to stand steadfast against their vain popish doctrine and idolatry. But thanks to God, who gave to his witnesses faith and patience, with stout and manly hearts to despise all torments; neither was there so much as any one man that once showed any sign of disobedience

towards the magistrates. They shed their blood gladly in the defence of the truth, so leaving example unto all men of true and perfect obedience; which is to obey God more than men, and if need require it, to shed their own blood rather than to depart from God's truth.

Dr. Taylor, perceiving that he could not be suffered to speak, sat down, and seeing one named Soyce, he called him and said; Soyce, I pray thee come and pull off my boots, and take them for thy labour. Thou hast long looked for them, now take them. Then rose he up, and put off his clothes unto his shirt, and gave them away. Which done, he said with a loud voice: Good people, I have taught you nothing but God's holy word, and those lessons that I have taken out of God's blessed book, the holy bible; and I am come hither this day to seal it with my blood. With that word, Holmes, yeoman of the guard aforesaid, who had used Dr. Taylor very cruelly all the way, gave him a great stroke upon the head with a waster,* and said, Is that the keeping of thy promise, thou heretic? Then he, seeing they would not permit him to speak, kneeled down and prayed, and a poor woman, who was among the people, stepped in and prayed with him; but her they thrust away, and threatened to tread her down with horses; notwithstanding she would not remove, but abode and prayed with him. When he had prayed, he went to the stake and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch barrel, which they had set for him to stand in, and so he stood with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together, and his eyes toward heaven, and so he continually prayed.

Then they bound him with chains, and the sheriff called one Richard Doningham, a butcher, and commanded him to set up fagots; but he refused to do it, and said; I am lame sir, and not able to lift a fagot. The sheriff threatened to send him to prison, notwithstanding he would not do it.

Then appointed he one Mullein of Carsey, a man for his virtues fit to be a hangman; and Soyce a very drunkard; and Warwike, who, in the commotion time in king Edward's days, lost one of his ears for his seditious talk; amongst whom was also one Robert King, a deviser of interludes,† who also was there present, and had doing there with the

* A cudgel.

† A strolling player. This King was one of them which went with his halberd to bring them to death which were burnt at Bury. *Fox.*

gunpowder; what he meant and did therein, he himself saith he did it for the best, and for quick despatch; the Lord knoweth, who shall judge all; more of this I have not to say. These four were appointed to set up the fagots and to make the fire, which they most diligently did. And this Warwike cruelly cast a fagot at him, which lighted upon his head, and brake his face, so that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor; O friend, I have harm enough, what needed that? Furthermore, sir John Shelton there standing by, as Dr. Taylor was speaking and saying the psalm Miserere in English, struck him on the lips; Ye knave, said he, speak Latin, I will make thee. At the last they set to fire, and Dr. Taylor, holding up both his hands, called upon God, and said: Merciful Father of heaven, for Jesus Christ's my Saviour's sake, receive my soul into thy hands. So stood he still, without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till Soyce with a halberd struck him on the head, that the brains fell out, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire.

Thus rendered the man of God his blessed soul into the hands of his merciful Father, and to his most dear and certain Saviour Jesus Christ, whom he most entirely loved, faithfully and earnestly preached, obediently followed in living, and constantly glorified in death. They that were present and familiarly conversant with this Dr. Taylor, reported of him, that they never saw in him any fear of death, but especially and above all the rest who besides him suffered at the same time, he always showed himself merry and cheerful in time of his imprisonment, as well before his condemnation, as after—he kept one countenance and like behaviour. Whereunto he was the rather confirmed by the company and presence of master John Bradford, who was in the same prison and chamber with him.*

* The day following, a sermon was preached at Hadley, by Newall, the popish priest of the town, in which he inveighed against the martyr with much scurrility and bitterness. Strype has given the heads and some passages of this discourse. Speaking of Taylor's death, Newall, said, "Sure he died in damnable case, if he did not otherwise repent in the hour of pain." On Aldham common, a stone yet marks the place where the martyr suffered; on it is rudely engraved, "1555. D. Taylor in defending that was good. At this plas left his blude." A more finished monument was erected there in 1818.

EXAMINATION AND LETTERS

OF THAT FAITHFUL MAN OF GOD,

JOHN CARELESS;

WHO, BY CRUEL IMPRISONMENT AND UNMERCIFUL DEALING
OF THE PAPISTS, DIED IN THE KING'S BENCH,
AND WAS BURIED IN THE FIELDS,
IN A DUNGHILL.

A. D. 1556.

A

BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF

JOHN CARELESS.

John Careless was a weaver of Coventry; a devoted follower of the truth. He was imprisoned for two years in Coventry gaol, and afterwards in the King's Bench, London, where he died in July 1556, and, his body being cast out into the fields, was buried in a dunghill. Fox has preserved a part of his examination before Dr Martin, from whence he appears to have declared the reason of the hope that was in him without hesitation, and he would doubtless have been sent to the stake had not God been pleased to take him away from the cruel designs of the adversaries of the truth. Strype speaks of Careless as an "excellent, pious man, and confessor;" and describes him as "one of that sort of laymen, who in the private assemblies of the professors, in those hard times, performed the office of ministers among them. For when the learned preachers and ministers were most of them burnt or fled, as they were by the middle of the reign, and their flocks left destitute of their faithful pastors, some of the laity, tradesmen or others, endued with parts and some learning, used in that distress to read the scriptures to the rest in their meetings, and the letters of the martyrs and prisoners, and other good books; also to pray with them, and exhort them to stand fast, and to comfort and establish them in the confession of Christ, to the death." The length of Careless's imprisonment, however, must have prevented him from taking much personal share in these labours, and his principal service to the persecuted flock of Christ was his letters, which are numerous and valuable. It is pleasing to observe the confidence and esteem with which this poor layman was treated by Philpot, and others, eminent for their rank, learning, and ability; they were "all one in Christ."

The letters of Careless were printed by Coverdale in his collection, and some were added by Fox; but they are now given in a complete form, for the first time since the year 1564. They contain lively delineations of his christian experience and faith in Jesus, set forth in the fullest manner, with a deep sense of his own unworthiness; and the reader will not turn aside from the letters of Careless because he may find in them expressions of a more homely cast than in the writings of those who enjoyed advantages superior to his, as to human learning. The dates of these letters were not preserved, and as the greater part of them do not refer to particular events of those days, they cannot be arranged in the order of time when written.

EXAMINATION

OF

JOHN CARELESS.

From the Acts and Monuments of John Fox.

The Death of John Careless in the King's Bench.

About this time, the 1st day of July, 1556, amongst divers other prisoners who died the same year in the King's Bench, was one John Careless of Coventry, a weaver. Who though he were by the secret judgment of Almighty God prevented by death, so that he came not to the full martyrdom of his body, yet is he no less worthy to be counted in honour and place of Christ's martyrs, than others who suffered most cruel torments; as well for that he was for the same truth's sake a long time imprisoned, as also for his willing mind and zealous affection he had thereunto, if the Lord had so determined it, as appears by his examination had before Dr. Martin. Which examination, because it contains little but wrangling interrogations, and matters of contention, wherein Dr. Martin would enter into no communication about the articles of his accusation, but only urged him to detect his fellows, it shall not be greatly material therefore to express the whole.

The effect of John Careless's examination before Dr. Martin briefly declared.

First, doctor Martin calling John Careless to him in his chamber, demanded what was his name. To whom when the other had answered that his name was John Careless, then began Dr. Martin to descant at his pleasure upon that name, saying, That it would appear by his condition, by that time he had done with him, that he would be a true careless man indeed. And so after other by-talk, there spent

about much needless matter, then he asked him where he was born.

Careless. At Coventry.

Martin. At Coventry? what so far, man? How camest thou hither? Who sent thee to the King's Bench prison?

C. I was brought thither by a writ, what it was I cannot tell. I think master marshal can tell you.

Marshal. In good faith I cannot tell what the matter is; but indeed my lord chief justice sent him from the bar.

M. Well, Careless, I would wish thou shouldest play the wise man's part. Thou art a handsome man: and it is pity but thou shouldest do well, and save that which God hath bought.

C. I thank your good mastership most heartily; and I put you out of doubt, that I am most sure and certain of my salvation by Jesus Christ; so that my soul is safe already, whatsoever pains my body suffer here for a little time.

M. Yea, marry, you say truth! For thou art so predestinate to life, that thou canst not perish, in whatsoever opinion thou dost die!

C. That God hath predestinated me to eternal life in Jesus Christ, I am most certain, and even so am I sure that his Holy Spirit, wherewith I am sealed, will so preserve me from all heresies and evil opinions, that I shall die in none at all.

M. Go to, let me hear your faith in predestination. For that shall be written also.

C. Your mastership shall pardon me herein. For you said yourself, erewhile, that you had no commission to examine my conscience. I will trouble myself with answering of no more matters than I needs must, until I come before them that shall have more authority further to examine me.

M. I tell thee then I have commission; yea, and commandment from the council to examine thee; for they delivered me thy articles.

C. Yea, I think indeed that your mastership is appointed to examine me of my articles which you have there in writing, and I have told you the truth. I do confess them to be mine own fact and deed. But you do now examine me of predestination, whereof my articles speak nothing at all.

M. I tell thee yet again, that I must also examine thee of such things as are in controversy between thee and thy fellows in the King's Bench, whereof predestination is a part, as thy fellow N. hath confessed, and thou thyself dost not deny it.

C. I do not deny it. But he that first told you that matter, might have found himself much better occupied.

M. Why? what if he had not told me? thinkest thou I would not have known it? Yes, or else thou shouldest have withstood my commission. For, I tell thee truth, I may now examine thee of the blessed sacrament, or any other thing that I list, but that I would show thee favour, and not to be too hasty with thee at the first.

Marshal. Yea, indeed, Careless, master doctor hath commission to examine you or any other of your fellows.

M. Yea, have I, I tell the truth of it.

C. Then let your scribe set his pen to the paper, and you shall have it roundly even as the truth is. I believe that Almighty God, our most dear loving Father, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, did elect in Christ—

M. Tush, what need all that long circumstance? Write, I believe that God elected, and make no more ado.

C. No, not so, master doctor. It is a high mystery, and ought reverently to be spoken of. And if my words may not be written as I do utter them, I will not speak at all.

M. Go to, go to, write what he will. Here is more business than needeth.

C. I believe that Almighty God, our most dear loving Father, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, through Jesus Christ, did elect and appoint in him, before the foundation of the earth was laid, a church or congregation, which he doth continually guide and govern by his grace and Holy Spirit, so that not one of them shall ever finally perish. When this was written, master doctor took it in his hand and read it, saying,

M. Why, who will deny this?

C. If your mastership do allow it, and other learned men when they shall see it, I have my heart's desire.

M. And do you hold none otherwise, than is there written?

C. No, verily, nor ever did.

M. Write that he saith, otherwise he holdeth not. (So

that was written.) It was told me also that thou dost affirm, that Christ did not die effectually for all men.

C. Whatsoever hath been told you it is not much material unto me. Let the tellers of such tales come before my face, and I trust to make them answer. For indeed I do believe that Christ did effectually die for all those that do effectually repent and believe, and for none other. So that was written also.

M. Now, sir, what is Trew's faith of predestination? He believes that all men be predestinate, and that none shall be damned. Does he not?

C. No, forsooth, that he doth not.

M. How then?

C. Truly I think he believes as your mastership and the rest of the clergy do believe of predestination, that we are elected in respect of our good works, and so long elected, as we do them, and no longer.

M. Write that he saith, his fellow Trew believes of predestination as the papists do believe.

C. Ah, master doctor, did I so term you? Seeing that this my confession shall come before the council, I pray you place my terms as reverently as I spake them.

M. Well, well, write that Trew is of the same faith as the catholics are.

C. I did not so call you neither: I wonder what you mean.

Marshal. You said the clergy, did you not, Careless?

C. Yes, forsooth, did I. So then it was written the clergy.

M. Now, sir, what say you more?

C. Forsooth, I have no further to say in this matter.

M. Well, Careless, I pray thee prove thyself a wise man, and do not cast away thy life wilfully.

C. Now the Lord he knoweth, good master doctor, that I would full gladly live, so that I might do the same with a safe conscience. And your mastership shall right well perceive that I will be no wilful man, but in all things that I stand upon, I will have sure ground.

M. Now the Lord knoweth, good Careless, that I would gladly make some means to preserve thy life. But thou speakest so much of the Lord, the Lord.—Wilt thou be content to go with my lord Fitzwalter into Ireland? Methinks thou art a goodly tall fellow to do the queen service there. How sayest thou?

C. Verily, master doctor, whether I am in Ireland, France, or Spain, or any place else, I am ready to do her grace the best service that I can, with body, goods, and life, so long as it doth last.

M. That is honestly said; I promise thee every man will not say so. How say you, master marshal? This man is meet for all manner of service. Indeed thou art worthy, Careless, to have the more favour.

C. Indeed, sir, I hope to be meet and ready unto all things that pertaineth unto a true christian subject to do. And if her grace, or her officers under her, do require me to any thing contrary to Christ's religion, I am ready also to do my service in Smithfield for not observing it, as my bedfellow and other brethren have done, praised be God for them.

M. By my troth thou art a pleasant fellow as ever I talked with of all the protestants, except it were Tomson. I am sorry that I must depart from thee so soon; but I have such business now, that I can tarry with thee no longer. Well, yet thou canst not deny, but you are at jars amongst yourselves in the King's Bench,* and it is so throughout all your congregation, for you will not be a church.

C. No, master doctor, that is not so. There are a thousand times more variety in opinions among your doctors, which you call of the catholic church, yea, and that in the sacrament, for the which there is so much bloodshed now-a-days. I mean of your latter doctors and new writers; as for the old they agree wholly with us.

M. No, Careless, this is not so; there thou art deceived.

C. Verily it is so, master doctor. I am not deceived therein any thing at all, as it hath been, and is evidently proved by such as God hath endowed with great learning.

Then he turned him again to the marshal, and whispered with him awhile, when turning unto me again, he said,

M. Farewell, Careless, for I can tarry no longer with thee now, my business is such.

C. God be with you, good master doctor. The Lord give your mastership health of body and soul.

M. God have mercy, good Careless, and God keep thee

* Some further particulars respecting these disputes are given in Bradford's letters.

from all errors, and give thee grace to do as well as I would wish myself.

C. I thank your good mastership. I pray God I may do always that is acceptable in his sight. Whereunto they all said, Amen. And so I departed with a glad heart. God only have the whole praise, Amen.

It appears by the examination of the aforesaid John Careless, that he was kept a prisoner the space of two whole years, having wife and children. In which captivity, first being in Coventry jail, he was there in such credit with his keeper, that upon his word he was let out to play in the pageant about the city with other his companions. And that done, keeping touch with his keeper, he returned again into prison at his hour appointed.

And after that, being brought up to London, he was endowed with such patience and constant fortitude, that he longed for nothing more earnestly, than to come to the promotion to die in the fire, for the profession of his faith. Yet it so pleased the Lord to prevent him with death that he came not to it, but died in the prison, and after was buried in the fields, in a dunghill, as were many more.

In the mean time while he was in prison in the King's Bench, it chanced he was in great heaviness and perturbation of mind and conscience, whereupon he wrote to M. Philpot being then in the bishop of London's coalhouse. Upon the occasion hereof M. Philpot sent an epistle consolatory unto him, specified among M. Philpot's letters, unto which epistle John Careless made answer. See letter iv. p. 125.

LETTERS

OF THAT FAITHFUL MAN OF GOD,

JOHN CARELESS.

LETTER I.

To his most dear and faithful brethren in Newgate, condemned to die for the testimony of God's everlasting truth.

The everlasting peace of God, in Jesus Christ, the continual joy, strength, and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his eternal mercy, be with you, my most dear and faithful loving brother Tyms, and with all the rest of my dear hearts in the Lord, your faithful fellow-soldiers, and most constant companions in bonds, yea, of men condemned most cruelly for the sincere testimony of God's everlasting truth, to the full finishing of that good work, which he hath so graciously begun in you all, that the same may be to his glory, the commodity of his poor afflicted church, and to your everlasting comfort in him. Amen.

Ah, my most sweet and loving brethren, and dearest hearts in the Lord, what shall I say, or how shall I write unto you, in the least point or part to utter the great joy that my poor heart hath conceived in God, through the most godly example of your christian constancy and sincere confession of Christ's verity? Truly my tongue cannot declare, nor my pen express the abundance of spiritual mirth and gladness that my mind and inward man hath felt, ever since I heard of your hearty boldness, and modest behaviour before that bloody butcher, in the time of all your crafty examinations, especially at your cruel condemnation in their cursed consistory place. Blessed

be God the Father of all mercy, and praised be his name, for that he hath so graciously performed upon you his dear darlings, his most sweet and comfortable promises, in not only giving you the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his holy and mighty Spirit, to the faithful confession of his Christ, for whose cause, O most happy men, ye are condemned to die; but also in giving you such a mouth and wisdom as all your wicked enemies were not able to resist, but were fain to cry, Peace, peace, and not suffer you to speak. As truly as God liveth, my dear brethren, this is not only unto you a most evident probation that God is on your side, and a sure certainty of your everlasting salvation in him, but also to your cruel adversaries, or rather, God's cursed enemies, a plain demonstration of their just eternal woe and damnation; which they shall be full sure shortly to feel, when ye shall full sweetly possess the place of felicity and pleasure prepared for you from the beginning.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, cease not so long as you are in this life, to praise the Lord with a lusty courage, for that of his great mercy and infinite goodness, he hath vouched you worthy of this great dignity, to suffer for his sake not only the loss of goods, wife, and children, long imprisonment, cruel oppression, &c., but also the very deprivation of this mortal life with the dissolution of your bodies in the fire. The which is the greatest promotion that God can bring you or any other unto in this vale of misery, yea, so great an honour, as the highest angel in heaven is not permitted to have; and yet hath the Lord, for his dear Son Christ's sake, reputed you worthy of the same; yea, and that before me and many others, who have both long looked and longed for the same.

Ah, my most dear brother Tyms, whose time resteth altogether in the hands of the Lord, in a full happy time camest thou into this troublesome world, but in a much more blessed hour shalt thou depart out of the same: so that the sweet saying of Solomon, or rather of the Holy Ghost, shall be full well verified upon thee, yea, and all thy faithful fellows; Better is the day of death, saith he, than the day of birth. This saying cannot be verified upon every man, but upon thee, my dear brother, and such as thou art, whose death is most precious before God, and full dear shall your blood be in his sight. Blessed be God for thee, my dear brother Tyms, and blessed be God again

that ever I knew thee, for in a most happy time I came first into thy company. Pray for me, dear brother, pray for me, that God will once vouch me worthy of that great dignity whereunto he hath now brought you.

Ah, my loving brother Drake, whose soul now draweth nigh unto God, of whom ye have received the same, full glad may you be that ever God gave you a life to leave for his sake: full well will he restore it to you again, a thousand fold more glorious. Praise God, good brother, as you have great cause, and pray for me, I beseech you, who am so unworthy, so great are my sins, of that great dignity whereunto the Lord hath called you and the rest of your godly brethren, whom I beseech you to comfort in the Lord, as you can full well; praised be God for his gifts, which you have heartily applied to the setting forth of his glory, and the commodity of his poor afflicted church. Which shall surely redound to your everlasting joy, and comfort, as you shall most effectually feel ere ever it be long, though the wicked of the world judge far otherwise.

Ah, mine own hearts, and most dearly beloved brethren, Cavel, Ambrose, and both the Spurges; blessed be the Lord on your behalf, and praised be his name, who hath given you such a glorious victory. Full valiant have you showed yourselves in the Lord's fight, and full faithful in your painful service. Faint not, but go on forward as ye have most godly begun, for great shall your reward be at the end of this your travel. Ah, my good faithful brethren all, what shall I say, or what shall I write unto you, but even the same that good Elizabeth said to her godly kinswoman Mary, the blessed mother of Christ: Happy art thou which hast believed; for all things which the Lord hath spoken to thee shall be fulfilled. So I say to you, my dear hearts in the Lord, happy are ye all, yea, twice happy shall you be for evermore, because ye have stedfastly believed the most sweet promises, which God the Father hath made unto you with his own mouth, in that he hath promised you, who are the faithful seed of the believing Abraham, that ye shall be blessed for ever, world without end. The promises of God, your most sweet Father, as ye do believe, so do ye bear record that God is true. The testimony whereof ye have full worthily borne to the world, and shortly will full surely seal the same with your blood, yea, even to-morrow, I do understand. O constant christians, O valiant soldiers of the

high Captain, Jesus Christ, who for your sake hath conquered the devil, death, sin, and hell, and hath given you full victory over them for evermore. O worthy witnesses and most glorious martyrs, whose invincible faith hath overcome that proud, sturdy, bragging prince of the world, and all his wicked army, over whom ye shall shortly triumph for evermore. Ah, my sweet hearts, the everlasting treasures are full surely laid up for you in heaven. The immarcessible* and most glorious crown of victory is already made and prepared for you, to be shortly put upon all your happy heads. The holy angels of your heavenly Father are already appointed to conduct your sweet souls into Abraham's bosom. All the heavenly host rejoiceth already, for that they shall shortly receive you with joy and felicity, into their blessed fellowship. Selah.

Rejoice with double joy, and be glad my dear brethren, for doubtless ye have more cause than can be expressed. But, alas, I, that for my sins am left behind, may lie and lament with the holy prophet, saying, Wo is me that the days of my joyful rest are postponed. (Psal. cxix.) Ah, cursed Satan, which hath caused me so sorely to offend my most dear loving Father, whereby mine exile and banishment is so much prolonged. O Christ, my dear Advocate, pacify thy Father's wrath, which I have justly deserved, that he may take me home to him in his sweet mercy. O that I might now come home unto thee with my blessed brethren. Well; thy will, O Lord, be effectually fulfilled, for it is only good, and turneth all things to the best, for such as thou in thy mercy hath chosen.

And now, farewell, my dear hearts, most happy in the Lord. I trust in my good God yet shortly to see you in the celestial city, whereof undoubtedly the Lord hath already made you free citizens. Though you are yet with us for a little time, your true home is in heaven, where your treasure doth remain with your sweet Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, whose calling you have heard with the ears of your hearts, and therefore ye shall never come into judgment, but pass from death to life. Your sins shall never more be remembered, be they ever so many, so grievous, or so great, for your Saviour hath cast them all into the bottom of the sea; he hath removed them from you, as far as the east is from the west, and his mercy hath much more prevailed over you, than the distance is

* Never fading.

between heaven and earth; and he hath given you for an everlasting possession of the same, all his holiness, righteousness, and justification, yea, and the Holy Ghost into your hearts, wherewith ye are surely sealed unto the day of redemption, to certify you of your eternal election, and that ye are his true adopted sons, whereby ye may boldly cry unto God, "Abba, dear father," for evermore: so that now no creature in heaven, earth, nor hell, shall be able to accuse you before the throne of the heavenly king. Satan is now cast out from you; he himself is judged and hath not part in you. He will once more bite you by the heel, and then he hath done: for at that time you shall bruise his head through your own good Christ, and so have you final victory for evermore. In joyful triumph whereof, ye shall sweetly ascend into the place of eternal rest, whither your eldest brother Christ is gone before you, to take possession for you, and to prepare your place under the holy altar, with Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Rogers, Hooper, Saunders, Farrar, Taylor, Bradford, Philpot, with many others, who will be full glad of your coming, to see six more of their appointed number, that their blood may so much the sooner be revenged upon them that dwell on the earth.*

Thus I make an end, committing you all to God's most merciful defence, whose quarrel ye have defended, whose cause ye have promoted, whose glory ye have set forth, and whose name ye have constantly confessed. Farewell for awhile, my dear hearts in the Lord, I will make as much haste after you as I may. All our dear brethren salute you. They pray for you, and praise God for you continually. Blessed be the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, saith the Holy Ghost, and their works follow them. Your own, JOHN CARELES,

a most unprofitable servant of the Lord, yet of his great mercy, prisoner for his sake, abiding his further good pleasure. Pray, pray, pray.†

* Rev. vi. 10.

† Drakes, Tyms, Thomas Spurge, Robert Spurge, Cavel, and Ambrose, were burned in Smithfield, April 23, 1556.

LETTER II.

To M. Green, M. Whittle, and certain other prisoners in Newgate condemned, and ready to be burnt for the testimony of the Lord Jesus.

The everlasting peace in Jesus Christ, the continual comfort of his most pure and Holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear and faithful brethren and sisters of Newgate, the Lord's appointed sheep unto the slaughter, to the good performance of the great and notable work of the Lord, which he hath so graciously begun in you all; that the same may redound to the setting forth of his glory, and to the commodity of his church, and to your own everlasting comfort in him. So be it.

Ah, my dear hearts, and most faithful brethren and sisters in the Lord, what high lauds and praise, yea, what humble and continual thanks am I bound to give to God our Father, for you and on your most happy behalf, who so mightily hath magnified himself in you thus far, in giving you his holy and mighty Spirit, to the constant confessing of Christ's verity, even to the cruel condemnation, and I doubt not but he will do the same to the death. Oh, happy and blessed are you that ever you were born, that the Lord will vouch you worthy of this great dignity, to die for his sake! Doubtless it is the greatest honour that God can give you in this life. Yea, if they be so blessed of God that die in the Lord, as the Holy Ghost saith they are, how much more blessed and happy then are you, that die not only *in* the Lord, but also *for* the Lord. O that it were the good will of God, that the good hour were now come, that I might go with you. Ah, that my sins make me unworthy of such an excellent dignity!

Be thankful, dear hearts, be thankful and rejoice in the Lord: for mighty is his mercy towards you, and great is your reward in heaven, which you like faithful persons have plucked to you with a godly violence of an invincible faith. Oh, worthy warriors of the most high Captain. Oh, constant confessors of the everlasting verity: how glorious a crown of victory shall you shortly receive, which is prepared for all such as do continue to the end. Oh, you sweet saints of the Lord, how precious shall your death be in his sight. Oh, how dear are your souls to your Redeemer, in whose hand they shall most joyfully rest, and

the pains of death shall never touch you. Oh, how blessed shall you be, when Christ shall appear, at which time you shall receive your bodies again full of immortality. Oh, how joyful shall you be, when Christ, according to his promise, shall acknowledge you before his Father and his holy angels, as you have most constantly confessed him to be your Lord and only Saviour before men.

O blessed Green, thou meek and loving lamb of the Lord, how happy art thou to be appointed to die for his sake. A full dainty dish art thou for the Lord's own table. Fresh and green shalt thou be in the house of the Lord, and thy fruits shall never wither nor decay. Although here thou go forth sowing thy good fruits with tears, the time shall come that thou shalt reap with joy and gladness, the fruits of everlasting life, and that without ceasing. Be joyful, therefore, and fear not, for it is thy Father's will to give thee a kingdom, whereunto he hath chosen thee before the foundations of the world were laid.

Oh, happy minister, thou man of God, how glad mayest thou be of God's most gracious favour, which hath prevented thee in the day of thy trial.* Oh, happy Peter, whose part thou hast well played; therefore thy reward and portion shall be like unto his. Now hast thou good experience of man's infirmity, but much more proof and taste, yea, sense and feeling of God's abundant bottomless mercy. Although Satan desired to sift thee, yet Christ, thy good Captain, prayed that thy faith should not fail. God's strength is made perfect by thy weakness, and his grace is sufficient for thee, his dear child. Thine example did so encourage and strengthen thy poor brethren, that God is every way glorified by thee, and shortly will he glorify thee with himself, with that glory which he hath prepared for thee, his elect dearling, before the world was made. Therefore rejoice and be glad, for thou hast good occasion, in finding such favour in his sight.

This is most true, O my other brethren, whom I do not know, neither have I heard much of you, happy are you that ever you were born, and blessed be our God who hath given you such victory over the bloody beast; shortly shall you be clothed in large white garments, and fine robes of righteousness, and so shall you follow the Lamb

* Whittle had recanted but repented. See Philpot's Second Examination, p. 14.

on mount Sion, with new songs of mirth and melody, for your delivery forth of Satan's power and tyranny. God for evermore be blessed for you, and strengthen you to the end, as I doubt not but he will; for he never failed them that put their trust in him.

O my dear and faithful sister, Joan Warne, what shall I say to thee? Thy trial hath been great: thy victory in Christ hath been notable. Thou hast overcome many a sharp shower and storm. Shortly shalt thou arrive at the haven of quiet rest, and receive a reward due to a constant martyr. Thou shalt go home to thy heavenly Father, and possess for ever the inheritance which Christ hath purchased for thee, where thy earthly parents are still looking for thee, who hast triumphed over antichrist most victoriously. Oh blessed parents of happy children, who have showed such an example as the like hath been seldom seen. I salute thee, dear sister of like constant mind, whose constant example is worthy of continual memory. Praised be God for you, mine own sweet sisters, who hath made you play such wise virgins' parts. He hath plentifully poured the oil of his Spirit into the lamps of your faith, so that the light thereof shall never be extinct. You shall enter with your Bridegroom into everlasting joy, whereunto you were chosen in him from the beginning.

O, my dear brethren and sisters, you blessed saints of the Lord, how much, and how deeply am I bound to praise God for you, both day and night. Pray, pray for me, my dear hearts, for the tender mercy of God, that I may be made worthy to follow your trace. O that I had run the race of my life as far as you have done yours, and were as nigh my journey's end, as you are unto yours. But, alas! I lie like the lame man at the pool's side by Solomon's porch, and every man goeth into the place of health before me. But God will appoint me one, one day to put me in. I trust my lord of London's coal-house is empty, and all his officers idle. Therefore they must shortly fetch more sheep to the shambles; for he is the common slaughter slave of all England.* But happy are you that are passed through the pikes, and delivered out of his hands, and from all the angels of the darkness of this world, who long tempted you in the wilderness of the same; but now shall the angels of God come and

* Bonner repeatedly complained that the other bishops sent the martyrs to him to be judged, but he continued his cruel proceedings.

minister unto you, for they are your servants, to hold you up in their hands, that you shall not hurt your foot, no, nor one hair of your head shall perish. They shall carry you up to heaven in a fiery chariot, though you leave your mantle behind you for a time, till God restore the same again in a more ample and glorious sort.

Thus in haste, as it doth appear, I am constrained to make an end, committing you all to God's most merciful defence: who ever have you in his blessed keeping, desiring you all to remember me in your godly and faithful prayers, as I will not forget you in mine, by God's grace. The blessing of God be with you all, my dear brethren and sisters. All our brethren and fellow prisoners here have them most heartily commended unto you, and pray for you without ceasing. God send us a joyful meeting in his kingdom. Amen.*

By your brother and unfeigned lover,

J. Careles,

prisoner, abiding his most merciful will and pleasure.

Pray, pray, pray.

LETTER III

To my dear and faithful brother, William Tyms, prisoner in Newgate.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, with the continual joy, comfort, and strength of his sweet Spirit, be multiplied, and daily more and more increased in your good heart, my most faithful and dear brother Tyms, to the full quieting of your conscience, and beating back of all the fiery darts of the wicked, that you may shortly receive the glorious crown of victory, and, in the same, triumph over all your enemies, for evermore. Amen.

I cannot express the exceeding great joy and consolation of my poor heart, considering the marvellous works of God most graciously wrought upon you, not only in proving you, and trying your faith by his great and huge crosses, both inwardly and outwardly, but also in giving you such great consolation and constancy in the midst of the same. Faithful is God, and true of his promises, who

* Whittle, Green, and five others, two of whom were females, were burned in Smithfield, 27th January, 1556.

hath said, That he will never suffer his chosen children to be tempted above their strength, but in the midst of their temptation will make an outscape for them, by such means as may make to his glory and their everlasting consolation. My dear heart, great cause have you to be of good comfort, for I see in you as lively a token of God's everlasting love and favour in Jesus Christ, as ever I perceived in any man. In respect whereof, I do even with my heart love, honour, and reverence you, beseeching God for his glorious name's sake, in the mercy and blood of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, to finish his good work in you, as I doubt not but he will do according to his infallible promises; yea, I am well assured thereof, forasmuch as you have so effectually received his Holy Spirit into your heart, as a pledge and a sure seal of your eternal redemption, and a testimony of your adoption in Christ Jesus. For which cause Satan so sorely envies you, that he has now bent all his fierce ordnance against you, thinking thereby utterly to destroy the invincible fort of your faith, founded most firmly upon the unmoveable rock, Christ, against which neither the devil, sin, nor yet hell gates, shall ever prevail. Selah.

Therefore, mine own beloved in the Lord, be not discomforted for this your conflict, which doubtless shall greatly increase your crown of glory, triumph, and victory; but take a good heart unto you, and buckle boldly with Satan, both in himself and his subtle members. It is the very divine ordinance of God, that all his regenerate children shall be tempted, proved, and tried, as we see by the example of our Saviour Christ; who as soon as he was baptized, was straightways led of the Holy Ghost into the wilderness, there to be tempted of the devil. But there got he such a glorious victory over Satan, that he could never since finally prevail against any of his poor members; but in every assault that he maketh, either inwardly or outwardly, he getteth a foil, and taketh shame: so that now he rages with all the spite possible, especially because he knows his time is but short. St. James testifieth that he is but a very coward, that will soon flee, if he be faithfully resisted. And as for his tempting tools, the Lord hath made them manifest unto us, so that he cannot deceive us though he assault us: for, as St. Paul saith, His very thoughts are not unknown to us, as in you largely appears, praised be the Lord's name therefore.

You see, dear brother, that now to molest you, and such as you are, that are about to pass from this vale of misery, he has but two ways, or two pieces of ordnance to shoot at you, with which he cannot hurt you, because you have two bulwarks to defend you. The first of these terrible guns that Satan hath shot at you, is the very same that he continually shooteth at me, that is to say, fear and infidelity; for the ugliness of death, and horror of my sins, which are so many, grievous, and great. But this pellet is easily put away with the surer shield of faith, in the most precious death and bloodshedding of our dear Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, whom the Father hath given unto us, wholly to be ours for evermore, and with him hath given us all things, as Paul saith. So that though we be ever so great sinners, yet Christ is made unto us holiness, righteousness, and justification. He hath clothed us with all his merits, mercies, and most sweet sufferings, and hath taken unto him all our misery, wretchedness, sin, and infirmity. So that if any should now be condemned for the same, it must needs be Jesus Christ, who hath taken them upon him. But indeed he hath made satisfaction for them to the uttermost jot; so that for his sake they shall never be imputed to us, if they were a thousand times as many more as they are. This do you most effectually feel and know, dear brother, a great deal better than I can tell you, blessed be God therefore.

And now Satan, seeing that he cannot prevail with his boisterous battery against this bulwark of faith, which so quenches all his fiery darts that they can do you no harm, but rather do you good service to cast you down under the mighty hand of God, that he may take you up by his only grace and power, and so you may render him all the glory by Jesus Christ, which the enemy cannot abide in any wise, therefore he shooteth off his other most pestilent piece, to provoke you to put some part of your trust and confidence in yourself, and in your own holiness and righteousness, that you might that way rob God of his glory, and Christ of the honour and dignity of his death. But, blessed be the Lord God, you have also a full strong bulwark to beat back this pestiferous pellet also, even the pure law of God, which proves the best of us all to be damnable sinners in the sight of God, if he would enter into judgment with us, according to the severity of the same, and that even our best works are polluted and defiled, as the

prophet describes them. (Isa. lxiv.) With which manner of speaking our free-will pharisees are much offended; for it felleth all man's righteousness to the ground, I had like to have said, to the bottom of hell; and extolleth only the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is allowed before God, and is freely given to all those that firmly believe, as blessed be God you do.

Ah, my good brother Tyms, Satan hath mistaken when he begins to tempt you either to vain-glory or mistrust: for you are an old beaten soldier, and have had good experience of these manner of temptations, both by yourself and others, who you know well were beloved of God. Be of good cheer, therefore, dear heart, be of good cheer, for now Satan hath wrought all his malice, he has done all that he can, and has shot off all his last pieces wherewith he had thought to have done most mischief: but now he sees he cannot prevail, the strong tower of your faith being so invincible, he will pluck up all his tents, and get him to some other place to practise the like assaults, and then will the angels of God come and minister unto you the most sweet and heavenly consolations of the Holy Ghost. To Him therefore who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that ever we can desire or think, I do most heartily commit you, with all the rest of your godly prison-fellows, who comfort, strengthen, and defend you with his grace and mighty operation of his Holy Spirit, as he hath hitherto done; that you, having a most glorious victory over the subtle serpent, and all his wicked seed, may also receive the crown of glory and immortality prepared for you before the foundations of the world were laid, and which is so surely kept for you in the hands of Him whose promise is infallible, that the devil, sin, death, or hell, shall never be able to deprive you of the same. The blessing of God be with you, now and for evermore. Amen. Pray, pray, pray, for me.*

Your own for ever,

JOHN CARELES.

* William Tyms was curate of Hockley, in Essex, and being put from his cure, preached in the woods in that neighbourhood. For this he was apprehended by justice Tyrrel, a noted persecutor of those days, and sent to the bishops, by whom he was condemned and burned with others, April 23, 1556. Fox has preserved several interesting and valuable letters written by this martyr.

LETTER IV.

A letter of John Careless answering to the loving epistle or letter sent to him before by M. John Philpot, then in the stocks in the bishop of London's coal-house.

(*See Philpot's Letters*, XVIII.)

A faithful friend is a strong defence; whoso findeth such a one findeth a treasure.

A faithful friend hath no equal, the weight of gold and silver is not to be compared to the goodness of his faith.

A faithful friend is a medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him. Ecclus. vi.

The Father of mercy and God of all consolation comfort you with his eternal Spirit, my most dear and faithful loving friend, good master Philpot, as you have comforted me by the mighty operation of the same; the everlasting God be praised therefore, for ever. Amen.

Ah my dear heart and most loving brother, if I should do nothing else day and night, so long as the days of heaven do endure, but kneel on my knees and read psalms, I can never be able to render unto God worthy thanks, for his great mercy, fatherly kindness, and most loving compassion, extended unto me most vile, sinful, wicked, and unworthy wretch. O that the Lord would open my mouth and give me a thankful heart, that from the bottom of the same might flow his continual praise. O that my sinful flesh, which is the cause of my sorrow, were clean separated from me, that I might sing psalms of thanksgiving unto the Lord's name for ever; that with good Samuel's mother I might continually record this noble verse following, which by good experience I have found most true; praised be my good God therefore.

"The Lord," saith that good woman "killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to hell, and fetcheth up again." Praised be the Lord for ever, yea, and praised be his name, for that he hath given me true experience and lively feeling of the same. Blessed be the Lord God, whose mercy endureth for ever, who hath not dealt with me according to my deep deserts, nor destroyed me in his displeasure when I had justly deserved it. O what reward shall I give again unto the Lord, for all the great benefits that he hath done for my soul? I will gladly receive the

cup of salvation at his hand, and will worship his name with prayer and with praise.

Ah my dear heart, yea most dear unto me in the Lord, think not this sudden change in me to be some fickle phantasy of my foolish head, as indeed some others would surely suspect it to be. For doubtless it is the marvellous doing of the Lord, most merciful unto me his unworthy creature. God, for his great mercies' sake, give me grace to be more thankful unto him than I heretofore have been, and keep me that I never fall from his favour again.

And now, my dear brother, and most blessed messenger of the Lord, whose beautiful feet have brought much glad tidings unto my soul, what shall I do or say unto you, in the least to recompense the fatherly affection and godly care that you continually keep for me? O that God would give me the spirit of fervent prayer, that I might yet that way supply some little part of my duty toward you. Ah, my true loving friend, how soon did you lay aside all other business, to make a sweet plaster for my wounded conscience, yea and that out of a painful pair of stocks, which place must needs be uneasy to write in! But God hath brought you into a strait place, that you might set my soul at liberty. Out of your pinching and painful seat you have plentifully poured upon me your precious nard,* the sweet savour whereof hath greatly refreshed my tired soul. The Lord likewise refresh you, both body and soul, by pouring the oil of his gracious Spirit into your sweet heart.

Ah, good Jeremiah, hath Pashur put thee in the stocks? (Jer. xx.) Now thou hast the right reward of a prophet. Thy glory never began to appear until now. I doubt not but shortly, instead of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, (Jer. xxvi.) Jesus the son of the living God will come and deliver thee forth of the hands of all thine enemies, and will also make good against them and their antichristian synagogue, all the words that thou hast spoken in his name. The Lord hath made thee this day a strong defended tower, an iron pillar, and a brazen wall against the whole rabble of antichrist; and though they fight against thee ever so fiercely, yet shall they not overcome thee, for the Lord himself is with thee to help and deliver thee; and he will rid thee out of the hands of the wicked, and will deliver thee out of the hands of the tyrants. And in that you are not busy in casting pearls before swine, nor in giving the holy things

* Ointment.

unto dogs, you are much to be commended in my simple judgment. And sure I am, that your circumspect and modest behaviour hitherto hath been as much to God's glory and to the shame and confusion of your enemies, as any man's doings that are gone before you.

Wherefore mine advice and most earnest desire is, with all others of your loving friends, that you still keep that order with those blood-thirsty bitesheeps, (bishops I should say,) that you have begun.* For though in conclusion they will surely have your blood, yet shall they come by it with shame enough, and to their perpetual infamy while the world doth endure. They would indeed condemn you in hugger mugger† to darken God's glory, if it might be. But Satan's thoughts are not unknown to you, and the depth of his subtlety is by you well foreseen. Therefore let them do whatsoever God shall suffer them to do; for I know all things shall turn to your best. Though you lie in the dark, slorried‡ with the bishop's black coal dust; yet shall you be shortly restored unto the heavenly light, and made as white as snow in Salmon, and as the wings of a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold. (Psal. lxviii.) You know the vessel, before it is made bright, is soiled with oil, and other things, that it may scour the better.

Oh happy are you that you are now in the scouring house; for shortly you shall be set upon the celestial shelf as bright as angels. Therefore, my dear heart, I will now, according to your loving request, cast away all care, and rejoice with you, and praise God for you, and pray for you day and night, yea, I will now, with God's grace, sing psalms of praise and thanksgiving with you. For now my soul is turned to her old rest again, and hath taken a sweet rest in Christ's lap. I have cast my care upon the Lord who careth for me, and will be careless, according to my name, in that respect which you would have me. I will leave out my unseemly addition as long as I live; for it can take no place where true faith and hope is resident. So soon as I had read your most godly and comfortable letter, my sorrows vanished away as smoke in the wind, my spirit revived, and comfort came again, whereby I am sure the Spirit of God was author of it.

O my good M. Philpot, who art a principal pot indeed

* See Philpot's examinations. † In secret.

‡ Smeared, soiled.

filled with most precious liquor, as it appeareth by the plenteous pouring forth of the same: oh, pot most happy, of the High Potter ordained to honour, which dost contain such heavenly treasure in the earthen vessel. Oh pot thrice happy, in whom Christ hath wrought a great miracle, altering thy nature, and turning water into wine, and that of the best, whereout the master of the feast hath filled my cup so full, that I have drunken in the joy of the Spirit through the same. When martyrdom shall break thee, O vessel of honour, I know the fragrant savour of thy precious nard will much rejoice the heavy hearts of Christ's true members, although the Judases will grudge and murmur at the same. Yea, and burst out into words of slander, saying, it is but lost and waste.

Be not offended, dear heart, at my metaphorical speech.* For I am disposed to be merry, and with David to dance before the ark of the Lord: and though you play upon a pair of organs not very comely or easy to the flesh, yet the sweet sound that came from the same causeth me thus to do. O that I were with you in body, as present I am in spirit, that I might sing all care away in Christ: for now the time of comfort is come. I hope to be with you shortly, if all things happen aright; for my old friends of Coventry have put the council in remembrance of me, not six days ago, saying that I am more worthy to be burned than any that was burned yet. God's blessing on their hearts for their good report. God make me worthy of that dignity, and hasten the time that I might set forth his glory.

Pray for me, dear heart, I beseech you, and will that all your company do the same, and I will pray God for you all, so long as I live. And now farewell in Christ, thou blessed of God's own mouth. I will for a time take my leave, but not my last farewell. Blessed be the time that ever I came into the King's Bench, to be joined in love and fellowship with such dear children of the Lord. My good brother Bradford shall not be dead while you are alive; for verily the spirit of him doth rest on you in most ample wise. Your letters of comfort unto me in each point do agree, as though the one were a copy of the other. He

* Some readers may feel inclined "to be offended" thereat, but allowance must be made for the taste of that age respecting such allusions, and to the homeliness of the writer; the sentiment itself is exceedingly scriptural and beautiful.

hath planted in me and you have watered; the Lord give good increase. My dear brethren and fellow prisoners here, humbly and heartily commend themselves unto you and your company, mourning for your misery, but yet rejoicing for your plenteous consolation and comfort in Christ. We are all cheerful and joyful under our cross, and do lack no necessaries; praised be God for his providence and great mercy towards us for evermore. Amen.

LETTER V.

To my good brother, master John Bradford.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comfort of his sweet Spirit, who hath surely sealed you unto eternal salvation, be with you and strengthen you in your joyful journey towards the celestial Jerusalem, my dear friend and most faithful brother, master Bradford, to the setting forth of God's glory, and to your eternal joy in Christ. Amen.

Ever since that good M. Philpot showed me your last letter, my dear heart in the Lord, I have continued in great heaviness and perplexity; not for any hurt or discommodity that I can perceive coming towards you, unto whom, doubtless, death is made life and great felicity, but for the great loss that God's church here in England shall sustain by the taking away of so godly, worthy, and necessary an instrument, as the Lord hath made you to be. O that my life and a thousand such wretches lives more might go for yours. Oh, why does God suffer me and such other caterpillars to live, that can do nothing but consume the alms of the church, and take away you, so worthy a workman and labourer in the Lord's vineyard. But wo be to our sins and great unthankfulness, which is the greatest cause of the taking away of such worthy instruments of God, as should set forth his glory, and instruct his people. If we had been thankful unto God for the good ministers of his word, we had not been so soon deprived both of it and them. The Lord forgive our great ingratitude and sins, and give us true repentance and faith, and hold his hand of mercy over us, for his dear Son Christ's sake. Take not away all thy true preachers forth

of this realm, O Lord, but leave us a seed, lest England be made like unto Sodom and Gomorrah, when thy true Lots be gone.

But what go I about to mingle your mirth with my mourning, and your just joy with my deserved sorrow? If I loved you indeed, as I have pretended, I should surely rejoice with you most heartily, and praise God on your behalf from the very bottom of my heart: I should praise God day and night for your excellent election in and through his great mercy, and should give him most humble thanks for your vocation by his gospel, and your true knowledge in the same. I should earnestly praise him for your sweet justification, whereof you are most certain by God's grace and Spirit, and should instantly pray unto him for your glorification, which shall shortly ensue: I should rejoice and be glad to see you so dignified by the crown of martyrdom, and to be appointed to that honour, to testify his truth, and to seal it with your blood: I should highly extol the Lord, who hath given you a glorious victory over all your enemies, visible and invisible, and hath given you grace and strength to finish the tower that you have begun to build.* Finally, if I loved you I should most heartily rejoice and be glad to see you delivered from this body of sin and vile prison of the flesh, and brought into that heavenly tabernacle, where you shall be safely kept, and never offend him more.

This and much more should I do, if I had a good heart towards God, or you his dear child. But, alas, I am a hypocrite, and do seek nothing but mine own commodity. I would have God's everlasting providence give place to my peevish will and purpose, although it were to the hinderance of his glory and of your sweet commodity. God forgive me my horrible ingratitude, sins, and offences against him; and, good brother, do you forgive me my great negligence and unthankfulness toward you, and henceforth I promise you I will put my will to God's will, and pray that the same may be fulfilled in you, so long as you are on this earth; and when you are taken hence, I will most heartily praise the Lord for you, so long as I have my being in this world. Ah, my dear heart, now I must take my leave of you, and, as I think, my last farewell in this life; but in the life to come I am right well assured we shall joyfully meet together, and that shortly, I trust. And in

* Luke xiv. 28.

taking my leave of you, my dear heart in the Lord, I shall desire you faithfully to remember all the sweet messages, that the Lord, our good God and most dear loving Father, hath sent you by me his most unworthy servant, which as they are most true, so shall they be most truly accomplished upon you eternally; and for the more assurance and certificate thereof to your godly conscience, he hath commanded me to repeat the same unto you again, in his own name and word.

Therefore now give ear and faithful credence. Hearken, O ye heavens, and thou earth, give ear, and bear me witness at the great day, that I do here faithfully and truly the Lord's message unto his dear servant, his singularly beloved and elect child, J. Bradford. John Bradford, thou man so specially beloved of God, I pronounce and testify unto thee in the word and name of the Lord Jehovah, that all thy sins, whatsoever they are, be they ever so many, so grievous, or so great, are fully and freely pardoned, released, and forgiven thee by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, thine only Lord and sweet Saviour, in whom thou dost undoubtedly believe. Christ hath cleansed thee with his blood, and clothed thee with his righteousness, and hath made thee in the sight of God his Father, without spot or wrinkle. So that when the fire doth its appointed office, thou shalt be received, as a sweet burnt sacrifice, into heaven, where thou shalt joyfully remain in God's presence for ever, as the true inheritor of his everlasting kingdom, unto which thou wast undoubtedly predestinate and ordained by the Lord's infallible purpose and decree, before the foundation of the world was laid. And that this is most true that I have said, I call the whole Trinity, the almighty and eternal majesty of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to my record at this present; whom I humbly beseech to confirm and establish in thee the true and lively feeling of the same, Amen. Selah.

Now with a merry heart and joyful spirit, something mixed with lawful tears, I take my farewell of you, mine own dear brother in the Lord; who send us shortly a joyful meeting in his kingdom, that we may both sing praises together unto him with his holy angels and blessed spirits, for ever and ever. Farewell thou blessed of the Lord, farewell in Christ, depart unto thy rest in the Lord; and pray for me, for God's sake.

As I had made an end of this simple letter, I heard some

comfort both of good master Philpot's servant and yours; but, alas, I do scarcely believe them. Well, I will hope in God, and pray all night that God will send me some comfort to-morrow, and if the Lord give you sparing to-morrow, let me hear four words of comfort from you, for God's sake. The blessing of God be with you now and for ever. Amen.

Yours for ever in the Lord Jesus,

JOHN CARELES,

living in hope against hope.

[The letter of Bradford to Careless, to which the preceding letter of Careless was written as an answer, is printed by Fox here, rather than among Bradford's letters, as they explain each other. Bradford's subsequent reply to Careless is amongst his letters, p. 92.]

Master Bradford to Careless.

Almighty God our dear Father, through and for the merits of his dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, be merciful unto us; pardon us our offences, and under the wings of his mercy protect us from all evil, from henceforth and for ever. Amen.

Dear brother Careless, I heartily pray you to pray to God for me, for the pardon of my manifold sins and most grievous offences, which need no other demonstration unto you than this, namely, that I have behaved myself so negligently in answering your godly triple letters, which are three witnesses against me. God lay not them nor any other thing to my charge to condemnation, though to correction; not my will but his will be done. Concerning your request of absolution, my dearest brother, what shall I say, but even as truth is, that the Lord of all mercy, and Father of all comfort, through the merits and mediation of his dear Son, thy only Lord and Saviour, hath clearly remitted and pardoned all thy offences whatsoever they be, that ever hitherto thou hast committed against his majesty; and therefore he hath given to thee as to his child, dear brother John Careless, in token that thy sins are pardoned; he, I say, hath given unto thee a penitent and believing heart; that is, a heart which desireth to repent and believe: for such a one is taken of him,

he accepting the will for the deed, for a penitent and believing heart indeed.

Wherefore, my good brother, be joyful, glad, and of good cheer, for the Lord hath taken away thy sins; thou shalt not die. Go thy ways; the Lord hath put away thy sins. The east is not so far from the west, as the Lord hath now put thy sins from thee. Look how the heavens be in comparison of the earth, so far hath his mercy prevailed towards thee his dear child, John Careless, through Christ the beloved. Say therefore with David, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name; for he hath forgiven thee all thy sins; as truly he hath. And hereof I desire to be a witness. God make me worthy to hear from you the like true message for myself. Mine own dearly beloved, you have great cause to thank God, most heartily, that he hath given you such repentance and faith: the Lord increase the same in you and me a most miserable wretch, whose heart is harder than the adamant stone, or else I could not thus long have stayed from writing unto you. If I live and may, I purpose and promise you to make amends. Pray for me, my most dear brother, I heartily beseech you, and forgive me my long silence. God our Father be with us for ever. Amen.

Yours in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER VI.

To his Wife.

As by the great mercy of God, at the time of his good will and providence appointed, my dearly beloved wife, you and I were joined together in the holy and christian state of godly matrimony, as well to our great joy and comfort in Christ, as also to the increase of his blessed church and faithful congregation, by having lawful children, whom God of his mercy hath blessed us with, praised be his name therefore. Even so now by his merciful will and divine ordinance, the time is come, so far as I can perceive, wherein he will, for his glory and our eternal comfort, dissolve the same, and separate us asunder again for a time. Wherefore I thought it good, yea, and my bounden duty,

by this simple letter, to provoke, stir, and admonish you, to behave yourself in all your doings, sayings, and thoughts, most thankfully unto our good God, for the same. And therefore, my dear wife, as you have heartily rejoiced in the Lord, and oftentimes given God thanks for his goodness, in bringing us together in his holy ordinance; even so now I desire you, when the time of our separation shall come, to rejoice with me in the Lord, and to give him most hearty thanks, that he hath, to his glory and our endless advantage separated us again for a little time, and hath mercifully taken me unto himself, forth of this miserable world, into his celestial kingdom; believing and hoping also assuredly, that God of his goodness, for his Son Christ's sake, will shortly bring you and your dear children thither to me, that we may most joyfully together sing praises unto his glorious name for ever. And yet once again I desire you for the love of God, and as ever you loved me, to rejoice with me, and to give God continual thanks for doing his most merciful will upon me.

I hear say that you oftentimes repeat this godly saying, "The Lord's will be fulfilled." Doubtless it rejoices my poor heart to hear that report of you, and for the Lord's sake, use that godly prayer continually, and teach your children and family to say the same day and night. And not only say it with your tongues, but also with your heart and mind, and joyfully submit your will to God's will in very deed, knowing and believing assuredly, that nothing shall come to you or any of yours, otherwise than it shall be his almighty and fatherly good will and pleasure, and for your eternal comfort and commodity. Which thing to be most true and certain, Christ testifies in his holy gospel, saying, Are not two little sparrows sold for a farthing, and yet not one of them shall perish without the will of your heavenly Father? And he concludeth, saying, Fear not ye therefore, for ye are better than many sparrows. (Matt. x.) As though he should have said, If God have such respect and care for a poor sparrow, which is not worth one farthing, that it shall not be taken in the lime-twig, net, nor pitfall, until it be his good will and pleasure, you may be well assured, that not one of you, whom he so dearly loveth, that he hath given his only dear Son for you, shall perish, or depart forth of this miserable life without his almighty good will and pleasure.

Therefore, dear wife, put your trust and confidence

wholly and only in him, and ever pray that his will be fulfilled, and not yours, except it be agreeing to his will; the which I pray God it may ever be. Amen. And, as for worldly things, take you no care, but be you well assured the Lord your dear God and Father will not see you nor yours lack, if you continue in his love and childlike fear, and keep a conscience clear from all kinds of idolatry, superstition and wickedness, as my trust is that you will do, although it be with the loss and danger of this temporal life. And, good Margaret, fear not them that can but kill the body, and yet can they not do that until God give them leave; but fear to displease him that can kill both body and soul, and cast them into hell fire. Let not the remembrance of your children keep you from God. The Lord himself will be a father and a mother, better than ever you or I could have been unto them. He himself will do all things necessary for them; yea, as much as rock the cradle, if need be. He hath given his holy angels charge over them, therefore commit them unto him. But if you may live with a clear conscience, (for else I would not have you to live,) and see the bringing up of your children yourself, look that you nurture them in the fear of God, and keep them far from idolatry, superstition, and all other kind of wickedness. And help them to some learning if it be possible, that they may increase in virtue and godly knowledge, which shall be a better dowry to marry them than any worldly substance; and when they come to age, provide them such husbands as fear God and love his holy word. I charge you take heed that you match them with no papists; and if you live, and marry again yourself, which I would wish you to do, if need require, or else not; good wife, take heed how you bestow yourself, that you and my poor children be not compelled to wickedness. But if you shall be able well to live God's true widow, I would counsel you so to live still, for the more quietness of yourself and your poor children. Take heed, Margaret, and play the wise woman's part. You have warning by others, if you will take an example. And thus I commit you and my sweet children, unto God's most merciful defence. The blessing of God be with you, and God send us a joyful meeting together in heaven. Farewell in Christ, farewell mine own dear hearts all. Pray, pray.

LETTER VII.

To my dearly beloved in the Lord, Mistress A. K.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the help, comfort, and assistance of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you my most dear sister, to the performance of what he hath so graciously begun in you, that it may be to his glory, the profit of his church, and your eternal comfort in him. Amen.

As I am right sorry at my poor heart, O worshipful matron, that any afflictions or passions of heaviness should trouble your godly and loving heart, unto the which I wish unfeignedly all godly joy and quietness, even so am I glad and give God most hearty thanks, that he of his great goodness hath used me, poor wretched miserable creature, by any means to be an occasion of the increase of your godly joy and gladness. But, O my good and faithful sister, I see whereabout you go; you play with me as a good loving mother with her unwilling child; when it does anything at her desire she praises it and makes herself glad thereof, that it may take courage to do better and be more willing against another time. Even so do you, right reverend matron, make yourself glad of my simple doings, to comfort and encourage me, to continue in that which is good, and to grow and go forward willingly in the same. God, for Christ's sake, give me his grace, that in all things I may satisfy your godly expectation, that I may do some honour to his heavenly doctrine.

And as you have greatly comforted me with your most godly and loving letter, even so I beseech you to assist me with your faithful and hearty prayers, as I doubt not but you do, for I feel the present help thereof, praised be God therefore. God make me thankful for you, my dear sister, and also mindful of my duty towards you, and all others the Lord's elect children. Ah, my dear and faithful heart in the Lord, how much, and how deeply am I bound to praise God for you, and to give him thanks day and night on your good behalf. Oh, happy are you that ever you were born, that God will so mightily be magnified in you. O blessed woman that so surely believest and hast so plentifully tasted of God's Holy Spirit, that from thee do flow the rivers of the waters of life, to those in whom God hath made

manifest the might of his marvellous mercy, and hath given consolation in the same, so that you are able of your own good experience to comfort others in all their afflictions, which I can witness, I praise God therefore, in that I do deeply taste and feel the same. God for Christ's sake recompense the same and all other your good doings, sevenfold into your bosom, as I doubt not but he will do, according to his promise. God make me such a one as you report me to be, that my fruits may take such effect as you speak of. But, alas, I am a great, horrible, and most grievous sinner, therefore I fear me God is angry with me, for presuming to take his word in my mouth. God hide my sins from the light of the world, that I be not a slander to his truth. But it is you, O dear daughter of Abraham, who so love and live the gospel, that I and others are more confirmed in the truth thereof by your good example. God has at this day, in his poor afflicted church, a sort of worthy women, who do him and his such service as is acceptable in his sight, I speak of experience; I praise God, therefore, and not to the end to flatter you, or any other, the Lord is my witness.

God for my sins has taken from me the company of godly learned men, to my great grief and heavy discomfort; but of his great goodness and mercy he supplies my spiritual lack, by the good ministry of godly and virtuous women. Of which faithful labourers in the gospel, whose names are written in the book of life, my dearly beloved sister, you are not the least. The Lord be thanked for you, and blessed be the time that ever I knew you; for your love and faithful amity is to me a sure sign and seal of God's love and mercy. O, dear Lord, what am I upon whom thou shouldst vouchsafe to show such great tokens of thine inestimable love and kindness? O faithful Father, forgive me my great ingratitude and sins. O let me be no longer negligent in doing my duty towards thy dear children, whom thou hast linked in love with me, knitting our hearts together in a perfect bond of christian charity, whereby all men may see that we are thy disciples. O my dear sister, I would you knew what joy and comfort I do feel in my good Christ at this present hour; God make you partaker of the same; for this which I have partly comes by you, whom God has used as his good instrument thereto.

And whereas you do most godly counsel me with

St. Peter, to cast all my care upon the Lord, and to be careless, not only in name but also in effect; especially in respect of Him for whose sake I do suffer, and the sincere truth which I do profess; I thank you most heartily for your most godly and comfortable exhortation, and I intend by God's grace to follow the same as far forth as he shall assist me with his holy and mighty Spirit, without which I can neither take things patiently, nor rejoice under the cross as I ought to do. Oh what great cause have I to rejoice and be glad, that God, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, will count me worthy to suffer for his sake, and to bear his sweet cross wherewith he marvellously begins to fashion me into his own similitude and likeness, that in his glory I may be like him also. Oh how well may I be careless in deed, as well as in name, seeing that I have cast my care upon the Lord himself, who, I am right well assured by faith, careth for me, and hath committed me to Christ's safe custody, who loves me unto the end, and will not lose me, but will raise me unto life at the last day. The Lord is my light and my defence, of whom then should I be afraid? The Lord is the preserver of my life, what can man then do unto me? I am one of the Lord's elect, who shall lay aught then to my charge? The Lord himself doth justify me, who shall then condemn me? Since Christ is mine and I am his, what shall make me careful, or who shall separate me from his sweet love, which, as Solomon says in his sweet songs, is mightier than the death? No, no; let the tyrants come when they will, I trust they shall find me ready and willing to go home to my heavenly Father, whither my good brethren are gone before me, with joy, triumph, and victory over the bloody beast and her Babylonical brood; blessed be God therefore.

Your sweet examples of Elias, Daniel, and the Israelites, much confirm my faith in Christ, although I am far inferior to any of them. But, as you say full well, God himself is my Father, and loves me, his prodigal son, with an everlasting love. Sure I am, therefore, he will not see me lack either for body or soul; for he feedeth the birds and brute beasts, yea, and men that are much worse than they, as you full well have said. And further, my dear heart, whereas you say that your heaviness and sorrow is when you call to remembrance my cross, and double cross, &c.: ah, my good loving sister, let not my crosses make

your good tender heart heavy; but rather be glad and rejoice with me, that God of his great mercy will repute me worthy to bear them for his sake. Sing psalms with me of praise and thanksgiving, for God hath made me able to bear them patiently, if they were a thousand times as many more as they are, as indeed my sins have justly deserved. Well is me that ever I was born, that he would vouch me worthy to suffer at all hands, or all sorts of men, for his sake; or rather that it would please his goodness to choose me, poor caitiff, in whom himself would suffer. For the enemies do not punish me for my sins, as they might justly do; but they persecute sweet Christ in me, whose truth I do profess.

And now, as concerning the most comfortable doctrine of our eternal election in him, before the foundation of the world was laid; I do protest, before God and man, that if every hair of my head were a man's life, I would willingly give them all in defence thereof. Full little know our free-will men what they do when they go about so rashly to condemn that doctrine. The Lord illuminate their minds with the light of his Holy Spirit, that they may once see the truth thereof, and leave their kicking against the pricks. Indeed, dear friend, in respect of them and the peril which they are in, you and I both have good cause to mourn, lament, and be sorry, and to pray for them day and night, that the Lord, if it be his will, would convert them. And whether their blindness be of simplicity, as I hope it is, or of wilful obstinacy, which thing is greatly to be feared, yet have I no cause to be angry with them, for it is their own harm; whereas mine should have been the like, if God had left me to myself, as he might most justly have done. And for that I am as I am, his name only have the praise; and, for his sake, I will always seek to do them good as much as lieth in me. And whatsoever they have said, or shall say or do against me, I do and will as heartily forgive them all, as I would be forgiven of God my great sins and trespasses. For sure I am, that whatsoever he is that hath any true taste or lively feeling of the great mercy, love, and kindness of God towards him in Christ, he cannot bear hate or displeasure against any thing but sin, and Satan the only author thereof. Therefore, in that they talk so much of love, and let so little appear in their deeds, it evidently appears how little taste and lively feeling of the free mercy of God

in Christ they have. A weak faith hath ever a cold charity annexed unto it, which is quenched with every unkind word.

Yours, unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER VIII.

A letter of John Careless to a certain godly faithful sister, by the name of E. K.

The grace and free mercy of God in Jesus Christ, the sweet consolations of the Holy Ghost, the guide of all God's dear children, be with you, strengthen and comfort you, my dearly beloved sweet sister, E. K. now and ever. Amen.

Albeit, my dearly beloved sister in Christ, as yet we never saw one another personally to any knowledge, yet by the virtuous report that I have heard of you, and also by the large loving token that I have received from you, methinks that I do even at present see you, and behold your person, faithfully walking in the fear and love of God, joying and rejoicing with you in the Spirit, as though we were sweetly talking together of Christ's verity. The Lord God do I humbly beseech in the mercy and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he will strengthen us both with his holy and mighty Spirit, that we may constantly continue in the confession of his truth unto the end; that, like as we now see one another presently in spirit, we may also see one another personally in the glorious presence of God and his holy angels, where undoubtedly we shall know one another's persons, to our great joy, felicity, and endless comfort.

And now therefore, dear sister K., be strong in the Lord our God, for doubtless the time of trial is at hand; a great persecution, with cruel murdering of God's dear saints, is likely to be very shortly in this woful wicked realm of England. Therefore, dear sister, for the love of God, prepare you to the cross with all diligence, and make yourself ready to die with Christ, that you may also live with him for ever. There is no remedy; if you will be Christ's disciple, you must needs take up your cross and follow him; for the disciple must not look to be above his Master, nor the

servant to be better treated than his Lord. If we were of the world, good sister, no doubt the world would love us. But forasmuch as Christ hath chosen us out of the world, to serve God in spirit and verity, let us be well assured the world will hate us and persecute us, as it hath done our Lord and Master Christ. But yet let us be of good cheer, for Christ hath overcome the world. The pain is but short that we can feel here; but the pleasure is perpetual that we shall feel elsewhere.

Let us set before us the example of Christ, who abode the cross and despised the shame, in respect of the joy that was set before him. Even so let us consider for whose sake we suffer, whose cause we defend, and what glorious reward we shall have at the day of our victory; and then doubtless the consolation of these things will make all our sufferings sweet, and soon swallow up all the sorrows that we are plunged in for God's sake. I could recite divers texts of the scriptures to confirm this point. But I need not; for I am well assured that you know them most perfectly already. The Lord give you strength, and assist you with his Holy Spirit, that you may continually walk in all points according to your godly knowledge: and then shall you not do as the most part of our gospellers do now-a-days, the more is the pity.

There are a great many in England who perfectly know that the idolatrous mass is abominable, devilish, and detestable in the sight of God. And yet, alas! they are not afraid to pollute and defile their bodies, which ought to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, with being present at it; so sinning against God and their own conscience.

But, dear sister K., do you fly from it, both in body and soul, as you would fly from the very devil himself. Drink not of the harlot of Babylon's cup, by any means; for it will infect the body and poison the soul. Be not partakers of her sins, saith the angel, lest you be partakers of the plagues that shortly shall be poured upon her. Oh what an array is this! that so many who know God's truth, will now turn again and defile themselves in the filthy puddle of antichrist's stinking religion! They go about to save their lives with their double dissimulation; but doubtless, they shall lose everlasting life by it, if they do not repent in time, and turn unto the Lord. But, dear sister, my trust is, that you utterly abhor the coming to any such thing. I hope that you will not by any means

turn back into Egypt now, but that you will boldly venture through the wilderness of trouble and persecution, that you may come into the land which floweth with all kind of heavenly pleasures and joyful delectations, and possess the same for ever.

Let us consider how that every one of us owes unto God a death by nature, and how soon the Lord will require it of us, we know not. Oh how happy are we then, if God of his goodness appoint us to pay nature's debt with suffering for his truth and gospel's sake, and so making us his faithful witnesses with the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and confessors, yea, with his dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, to whom he here begins to fashion us like in suffering, that we might be like him also in glory. Thus, my dearly beloved sister, I have been bold to trouble you a little with my rude and simple letter, being made in haste as it doth appear. Yet I desire you to take it in good worth, as a token of my poor zeal unto you, and to accept my good will. And if it please God to spare me life and liberty, I trust hereafter to write unto you more largely. Fare ye well, dear sister E. K., the Lord bless you and all yours, and pour upon you the heavenly dew of his grace. The Lord endue you with plentiful knowledge of his verity, and fill you with his holy and mighty Spirit, that you may continually rejoice in the comforts of the same, now and ever. Amen. Pray, pray, pray, with steadfast faith.

Your daily orator,

JOHN CARELES,

Prisoner of the Lord.

LETTER IX.

*To my good sister, M. C.**

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, and the eternal comforts of his sweet Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful sister, to the full accomplishment of that good work which he hath most graciously begun in you, that the same may be effectual to the setting forth of his glory, and to your everlasting consolation in him. Amen.

My loving and faithful sister in the Lord, I thank you

* Mistress Cotton, a faithful sister and favourer of the gospel. *Fox*

for all your loving kindness showed unto me, but especially for your godly remembrance of me in your fervent and faithful prayers, and for your most godly and comfortable letter, whereby you do not only much increase my joy and comfort, but also put me in remembrance of my duty towards you.

Blessed be the Lord our God, who of his great mercy hath so beautified his church in these our days, that even unto many godly women he hath given most excellent gifts of knowledge and understanding of his truth, so that they are not only well able to inform their own consciences in all things necessary to salvation, but also most sweetly to comfort their sorrowful brethren and sisters who sustain any trouble for the testimony of God's truth; yea, and that which is more, even in the midst of their great conflicts of conscience. Of which most happy number of godly and virtuous women, my dear heart, you are one, and that of the chief, being plentifully endued with the gifts of God's most gracious Spirit, as full well appears in your daily doings. God only have the praise therefore.

Forasmuch then as God hath given you the gift to write, I shall most heartily desire you to let me hear from you sometimes, be it ever so little; for truly I take great comfort and courage thereby, specially in my poor conscience, which is sore assaulted of subtle Satan, and in a manner oppressed of my sins. Pray, dear sister, that God may give me true, hearty, and earnest repentance, and increase my faith, for they are both the good gifts of God only, and far past the reach of my power, to take at my pleasure.

Therefore, dear sister, if you will help me to beg the same of our dear loving Father, I am sure that he both can and will give them in his good time. As for the fear of death, or terror of the fire, I most heartily thank my good God, I feel it not; only it is mine own sins and unthankfulness, which hold hard battle, and wage strong war against me; which only go about to separate me from my good Captain, Christ, that I should not enjoy his glorious victory: but God being on my side, as I am sure he is, they cannot continually prevail against me. Though God for a time permit Satan to take his pleasure on me, as he did upon Job, yet I doubt not but in the end all shall turn to my profit, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whose most merciful defence I commit you,

dear sister, with all the rest of the Lord's elect. Farewell in Christ.

Yours unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELES.

Pray, pray, pray, pray.

LETTER X.

To my dear Sister, M. C.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and Holy Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful loving sister, and comfort your heart with the plenteous consolation in Christ; that with the abundance of the same you may, according to your old custom, comfort me in my sorrowful state, that I may be occasioned thereby to praise the Lord, with and for you, and others his dear children. Amen.

Albeit, my dear and faithful loving sister, it were now my part and very duty to show myself so comfortable and joyful in God, for the great triumph and glorious victory which he hath so graciously given unto his dear and faithful child, good M. Philpot, that you and all others, whose sorrows I dare say are much increased, might be solaced by the same: yet, alas! such is my loss and lack of him, that I cannot but so sorely lament the same, that I fear I shall not only discomfort you therewith, but also displease God, who for my sins hath taken him away. And though it had been both mine honesty and duty, seeing myself to be in so much sorrow, to have kept the same to myself, and not to have increased yours therewith: yet could I no longer forbear but to communicate some part thereof, to the end that you might communicate again to me, either your joy or sorrow, whichsoever you have most store of. If your joy in Christ have the victory, as doubtless it ought to have in the prospect of God's glory, which is so mightily set forth by his sweet saint: then I pray you come to me as shortly as you can, and communicate some part thereof unto me, whose froward and stubborn heart cannot yet be content to prefer the good will and glory of God, before mine own will and commodity, as I ought to do. But if sorrow in you have gotten the upper hand, as it begins to do in me, good sister, come and speak with me as soon as

you can, that we may measure our mourning together, and in comforting one another, may be both constrained to forget our sorrows and praise God with him, who is now singing in solace with his sweet companions that with such constancy went before him, looking and wishing for us two, I dare well say. God grant us grace to follow their faith and footsteps unto the end. Amen.

Ah, my dear heart, methinks I am like a vessel of wine that after it hath been tossed to and fro, if it should not have a vent, would burst in pieces. Even so the taking away of this true man of God, whose sweet comfort my poor soul lacks, has so tossed and turmoiled my poor heavy heart, that except I should, as it were with a vent, express the same to God with weeping tears, and open the same to you with words and letters, I think verily it would burst in pieces: which to me were most happily welcome, so that God were pleased therewith. Oh! if nature will so work in a wicked worldling, to make him heartily lament the loss of his friend, by whose death he yet obtains divers commodities, how can it be but the tender hearts that are mollified with the good Spirit of God, must needs bewail the taking away of those dear hearts, by whose death they are deprived of so many heavenly benefits, which so far, without comparison, surpass all earthly treasures! Ah, dear heart, I never knew what the benefit of that worthy Bradford was, until now that I feel the want of his dear fellow, Philpot, who full oft poured the precious water of life and comfort upon my poor afflicted soul. But now, alas! for my great ingratitude, negligence, and my other great sins, God has taken them both from me. I shall no more hear them in this life, the more is my sorrow, declare unto me the most comfortable message of God's great mercy towards me. Their worthy writings, alas, shall no more bring me the most joyful news and glad tidings of the gospel, to tell me that all my horrible sins and offences are freely forgiven me. Oh, my great loss which makes me much to lament, and so vexes and torments my mind, that I cannot well tell what I write! Oh true token of God's terrible wrath against me, in taking away such precious jewels of comfort from me! But just is the judgment of God against me for my sins, who have largely deserved to be deprived of their sweet and comfortable company, not only in this life, but also in the life to come. But yet I know the Lord will not so do,

but of his great mercy he has taken them at this time from me, that I might make the more haste with hearty desire to be dissolved and to be with them. Oh gracious God, how much is thy mercy! How marvellous is thy loving power, and how great is thy goodness and the abundance of thine exceeding kindness, who turnest all things to thy glory and the commodity of thy chosen children! O make me so much to rejoice in the respect of thy glory, which thou so mightily hast magnified in thy sweet martyrs, that the same may soon swallow up my deserved sorrows. Amen. Commend me to my good sister C., and bring her with you if you can. John was wont to comfort Mary; but now, good sweet Maries, come to comfort John.

Written in haste, with plentiful tears, by your own in Christ.

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER XI.

To Mistress Cotton.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comforts of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his sweet mercies, be with you, dear friend and faithful loving sister, good mistress Cotton, to the full increase of your joy in Christ, now and evermore. Amen.

As from the very bottom of my poor heart I wish unto you health both of body and soul, my dear loving sister in the Lord, so will I never cease praying unto God for the same, according unto my most bounden duty. Howbeit I pray for the health of your body, upon condition; but of your soul without any condition; being well assured that the Lord, for his dear Son's sake, will perfectly grant me the same, so far as shall be most for your profit. So that if the health of your body will stand with the wealth of your soul, I am sure I shall have my petition granted for the health of the same. But if the sickness of your body be for the health of your soul, as I am sure it is, then have I also my desire granted, because I ask the same no further than it may stand with the other. But for the everlasting health of your soul do I heartily pray without the addition of any condition; for it is the Lord's good will I should so

do. Therefore I am sure my request is already granted therein, for His sake, who hath redeemed the same with his most precious blood, yea, in whom you were elected before the foundation of the world was laid. This is most true, and therefore let nothing persuade you to the contrary. Rest upon this Rock, and be sure the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. I know, dear heart, that you have done much good to the poor, for Jesus Christ's sake; yet beware you do not put any trust or confidence in your good deeds, merits, or deservings; but only in Jesus Christ, who hath given you himself, wholly to be yours, with all his holiness, righteousness, justification, and redemption, and all that ever he may. On the other side, he hath taken upon himself all your sins, misery, and infirmity, and hath made a full satisfaction for them, with the sacrifice of his own body and blood offered once for all. This I know, my good sister, you do constantly confess and believe, as the godly fruit of your christian faith doth daily testify. I trust to be a witness with you at the great day, that your faith is unfeigned and full of godly charity: the Lord increase the same. I am constrained here to make an end full sore against my will. My poor prayers shall supply that which my pen doth lack. The blessing of God be with you, now and ever. Amen.

Your daily orator,

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER XII.

To my most dear and faithful brother in the Lord, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, with continual joy, comfort, and quietness of conscience, through the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost, be with you, my most dearly beloved brother V., to the increase of your crown and victory, now and ever. Amen.

I have been oftentimes earnestly minded to write unto you, my dear heart in the Lord, since I received your most godly and loving letter; but the likelihood and hope which I have often since conceived, to see you and talk with you mouth to mouth, has caused me to forbear what love has so often provoked me unto. But since my expectation is not yet certified, nor, as far as I can perceive,

is likely to be in this life; I can no longer forbear the scribbling these few lines unto you. The which I desire you to take in good worth, for as I have done the same altogether in haste, so is it the contents of a heart something troubled, and not altogether in so sweet a security as it has been in times past, and I doubt not but it shall be so full well again.

Ah, my dear brother, if I should not now and then drink with Christ of the bitter cup of inward afflictions, I should too much neglect my duty towards you and others, my dear hearts in the Lord, whom the mighty God has made worthy to feel with Christ, the fellowship of his sufferings. But, blessed be my God, and most dear loving Father, who of his great mercy and infinite goodness in Christ, will vouch me worthy, with you and others of his dear dearlings, to carry as well the inward cross which is most grievous and heavy, as the outward cross which is so light and easy. I know there is an exceeding weight of glory prepared for me, although Satan now, by God's permission, seeks all means possible to persuade me to the contrary, by casting his clouds and mists over me that he may darken the love of my dear Lord and Christ, who died for me, yea, and that when I was his utter enemy, and by nature the very child of wrath and perdition; but I know that the love of my Christ being so great, will burst out again most gloriously. O God, methinks, even now, I feel it begin to kindle in my breast marvellously.

Pray for me, dear heart, pray for me, that my soul may sweetly turn to her old rest again; for verily Satan has made a sore ruffling with her of late. But I see well my God is faithful, as St. Paul saith, and will not suffer her to be tempted above the strength he will give her. Pray for me, dear heart, I say again, and praise God most heartily for his great mercy extended towards me, as by your letter I understand you do; I thank you most heartily therefore, and I promise you, by God's grace, I will never forget you so long as the breath is in my body, neither can I, though I would.

And now, mine own beloved in the Lord, I long much to hear of your state, which I trust is most happy and blessed. Gladly would I hear that the celestial Bridegroom were at home with you, and that in respect of his most blessed and cheerful presence, you had cast away all your mourning garments. O that I might once hear you

heartily sing with the spouse this sweet verse, " My delight is to sit under the shadow of my love, for his fruit is full sweet unto my throat; he brings me into his wine cellar; his banner spreadeth over me his love; his left hand lieth under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me," &c. O, my dear heart, I am now constrained to end for this time, but God will send me another, I doubt not; to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you.

Yours unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER XIII.

To my dear Brother T. V

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear friend and faithful brother V., to the increase of your faith, and comfort of your sorrowful spirit, which is to the Father a sweet sacrifice, through Christ, for whose sake he will never despise your humble and contrite heart, but favourably accepts the same, and will in most ample wise perform the desire thereof, to his glory, and your eternal comfort in him.

In the midst of my manifold crosses and troubles, wherein I am constrained to flee unto God for refuge and succour by earnest and faithful prayer, I cannot forget you, my dear heart in the Lord; but esteeming your state for mine own, I do pour forth my complaint for you, as I do for myself, and rather more, as I think present need doth require, desiring most heartily to hear of the good success of the same in you. The Lord God, for his great mercies' sake, accomplish my desire, as I doubt not but he will, when he seeth it good and most to his glory, and to your comfort and advantage. O that I might once see you so joyful in Christ, as you have just cause to be, that you might say with David, Awake my glory, awake lute and harp, bring forth the psalter with the joyful song, that I may sing a new song of praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord, for the light of his favourable countenance, his help and deliverance. Oh, that would refresh me as a most precious oil, and gladden my poor heart, which is assaulted with sorrow, more ways than one. I doubt not

but the same shall by your means receive much comfort, though for a time it mourns with you, that we may be made both glad together, yea, and that with such gladness as shall continue for ever. But in the mean space, I say, most happy are you, that so heartily mourn for the absence of the Bridegroom. If you were not a wedding child,* you could never do it. Only Christ's true disciples do mourn for his absence: therefore shall they doubtless rejoice at his presence, which will be so much more joyful, by how much the absence is more sorrowful.

Therefore, my good brother, take a good heart unto you, and be of good cheer. Say with the prophet David, O my soul, why art thou so heavy, and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his loving countenance, and because he is my God. Read the psalms xlii. and xliii. for your comfort, and consider that the holy king and prophet, at the making and first saying of them, was even in the same case that you are now in; but he still comforted himself with the sweet promises of God; and so do you, my dear heart, for to you they as well pertain, as they did to him, and as surely shall they be performed upon you, as they were upon him; for he is one God and dear Father unto you both, and for his mercy, truth, and promise sake, he must needs make good unto you all that he hath said. If his love towards you stood in respect of your own merit and worthiness, you might well mourn, lament, and complain; yea, you had good cause to doubt, fear, and mistrust. But seeing he loveth you only for and in Jesus Christ, who is your whole holiness, righteousness, and redemption, lay aside all mourning, lamenting, and complaining; banish from you all fear, mistrust, and infidelity; and know that as long as Christ doth continue God's Son, so long must the love of the Father continue towards you immutable, and his good will unchangeable, and cannot be altered through any of your infirmities. For this is most true, that as long as the cause of any thing lasts, so long must the effect remain: but Christ is the whole cause why the Father loveth you, and he also continueth for ever: then must I needs conclude that the love of the Father continues towards you for ever, and, as the psalmist most joyfully so often sings, His mercy endureth for ever and ever.

* A lawful child.

This is most true, mine own dear heart, although the Lord for a time hide it from your senses, that you might be the more earnest in prayer to him for the feeling of it; and also the more thankful for it when he gives the lively taste of it, as doubtless he will do ere it be long: and then shall you be well able to comfort others in the same state that you are now in, with the same comfort wherewith you are, and further shall be comforted of God.

Therefore lift up your hands that are now a little fallen down, and stretch forth the weak knees of your troubled mind, which now mourneth with a godly mourning, and therefore shall it be full well comforted with that sweet peace of God which passeth all understanding; and you are sure already to enjoy the blessing that Christ gave unto the godly mourners of Sion upon the mount at the first sermon that he made. O happy V., in whose mourning company I had rather be than in the house of mirth and banqueting, of such as see not what cause they have to mourn and be sorry. But yet, my good brother, use a measure in this your godly mourning, and make not your faithful friends too sorry for you. Let the persuasions of such godly lovers as you daily company with, or rather the persuasions of the Holy Ghost by them, move you to some godly mirth and rejoicing. Consider that you are commanded of God by the mouth of St. Paul, thereto. Rejoice in the Lord, saith he, and I say again, Rejoice. Mark how he doubles the sentence, that we may perceive it is a most earnest and necessary thing he requires. Obey the commandment of God in this behalf; wherein as you cannot but highly please him, so I assure you, you shall very much rejoice my poor heart, and the hearts of others who pray for you with mourning tears, and make that cruel enemy Satan, and all your adversaries sorry, who will rejoice and laugh to see you mourn. O, my good brother, let it manifestly appear, that the Lord of his great mercy hath heard our faithful and hearty requests for you. Oh how would that rejoice me in the midst of my troubles!

Therefore now, to conclude, because the darkness constrains me to make an end for this time, I say, my dear and faithful brother V., in respect of the great cause you have of your own part through Christ, and for the glory and honour of Almighty God; the comfort, joy, and rejoicing of your dear brethren and sisters in Christ, also your own duty by the commandment of God; and last of

all to vex, molest, and grieve Satan withal, rejoice in the Lord, and be most heartily glad in him, who is wholly yours, and you are his, and shall be for evermore. Selah.

Farewell, mine own beloved in the Lord, and praise God with joyful lips and a merry heart, and pray for me his most unprofitable servant, who have more cause concerning myself to lament, than any one man else living; but my good Bridegroom is present, and biddeth me cast away my mourning garments, and therefore I must needs be joyful with him: and so he biddeth you to be, by my mouth, for he is present with you, although for sorrow you cannot know him, as Magdalen could not in the garden, until he spake unto her. The Lord God speak these words of comfort in your heart, and open the eyes of your mind, that you may perfectly perceive and feel his blessed presence, and so rejoice in the same for evermore. Amen. Comfort your heart in Christ, and cast your care upon him, for he careth for you.

Your brother in the Lord, abiding his good pleasure,

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER XIV.

To my most faithful and dear brother, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of his most pure and holy Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful brother V., and in all things make you joyful through the lively feeling of his fatherly mercy and godly providence for you; that you, having daily more and more the sure sense of the same, may be able of your own good experience perfectly to comfort me and all others with the same comfort which you have, and further shall receive of God; who bless and keep you, now and ever. Amen.

I cannot express, my dear heart in the Lord, how my joys do increase to see how God of his great mercy daily adds unto his true church and poor afflicted congregation, such as he in Christ hath elected to salvation, before the foundation of the world was laid. Of which most happy number, preserved only by his free mercy and grace, the Lord, no doubt, has chosen and reckons you for one, and hath registered your name in his book of life where it shall

remain for ever, and that so surely, that neither Satan, death, sin, nor hell, shall ever be able to blot or scrape out the same; though for the further proof and trial of your faith, God many times suffers the same to appear to your senses far contrary. Rejoice, therefore, and with gladness give God most humble praise and hearty thanks, that ever you lived to see this day, in which he has surely sealed you with his holy and mighty Spirit unto the day of your final redemption and most happy deliverance from all corruption. God make the same certain unto you, by the true testimony of the Holy Ghost in your heart, whose witness unto your spirit that you are the adopted son of God, is more sure and certain than all the outward oracles in the world. And as this most true and heavenly doctrine brings all mirth, joy, peace, and quietness unto a christian conscience, so does it set Satan in a most sore rage and malice against the same; for that ancient enemy of ours cannot abide that we should altogether hang and depend upon God, our most dear Father, with full trust and confidence. He would not have us thoroughly persuaded of his great love and kindness towards us; yea, of his most fatherly care and providence for us his dear children. For the enemy knows that whosoever has faithfully conceived this true opinion of God, shall by the same be allured, yea, forced and constrained to set all his love and heart's delight upon the Lord again; and, in respect of the same only, be willing to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of his life; yea, of love and childlike fear seek to please him, be loth to offend him, and ready with good will to suffer all things for his sake: which are the points and properties belonging to the Lord's elect.

Therefore, above all things, Satan seeks to darken and dim this doctrine of our salvation, yea, wholly to quench it out if he could, and to bring us from this persuasion of God's Spirit, unto distrust and infidelity, which is the very root and fountain whence all other wickedness does spring. For whatsoever is not done of this faith and godly persuasion, is sin in the sight of God, how glorious soever it appear in the sight of men. Let us, therefore, above all things, pray for the increase of faith, by the light whereof we perfectly see in our good Christ, God to be presently ours, with all that ever he is, or can be, and shall be, for evermore. Let us hold this fast as the sure sheet anchor

of our souls; and though Satan stir up ever so many storms and tempests of trouble and persecution, or ever so many foul and foggy mists of darkness and heresies, yet shall our ship sail in safety; for God himself is our lodesman,* and his holy and mighty Spirit is the master mariner, and both can and will guide and conduct us into the haven of health, and port of everlasting safeguard. Therefore let us say with David, that though the waves and raging surges of the sea are marvellous, yet the Lord is more mighty and marvellous, and can still them with a word. Alas, I am here constrained to make an end, even in the midst of my letter, and truly I have been fain by occasions that have come, to lay aside this letter six or seven times since I began. Therefore take it in good worth as it is, and another time I trust to finish the same to your comfort, and to the accomplishing of my duty towards you, to whom I do owe myself and all that I can do: as God knoweth, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, my dear brother V., and all the rest of his dear darlings, whom I love as mine own soul, and thank God for your love to me.

The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

Yours unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELES.

Prisoner of the Lord, at all times abiding his most merciful will and pleasure. Pray for me, for God's sake, as I will never forget you.

LETTER XV.

To my most dear and faithful brother, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God, in Jesus Christ, the continual joy and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith, and lively feeling of his mercy, be with you, my dear heart in the Lord, and faithful loving brother, T. V., to the full accomplishing of that good work which he hath so graciously begun in you, that the same by all means may be to the setting forth of his glory, to the good of his poor afflicted congregation, and to the sweet comfort and quietness of your conscience in him, now and evermore, Amen.

* Pilot.

With such due honour, love, and reverence, as it becomes me to bear unto the sweet saints and dearly beloved children of God, I have most heartily commended myself unto you, my dear brother V., with all earnest and faithful remembrance of you in my daily prayers; thanking God right heartily that you do likewise remember me in yours; assuring you that my poor heart daily feels great consolation thereby; God only have the praise for the same, and all other his benefits. Ah, my dear heart in the Lord, well is me that ever I was born, that God, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, hath used me, most miserable wretch, at any time as his instrument to minister any thing unto you, either by word or writing, that might be an occasion of your joy and comfort in the Lord, and a provoking of you to praise and thanksgiving unto God for the same, as your most loving and godly letter seems to import. Oh, happy am I that the Lord hath appointed me unto so good a ground to sow his seed upon; but much more happy are you, whose heart the Lord hath prepared and made so meet to receive the same so effectually, giving thereto the sweet showers and heavenly dews of his grace and Holy Spirit, that it may bring forth fruit in due season accordingly; the increase whereof we shall shortly reap together, with perfect joy and gladness, and that continually.

Therefore, my dear brother, I say unto you, as good Elizabeth did to her dear cousin Mary; Happy are you, and happy shall you be for evermore, because you have believed. The most sweet and faithful promises of your Redeemer, Jesus Christ, you have surely laid up in the treasury of your heart. His comfortable calling you have faithfully heard; his loving admonitions you have humbly obeyed, and therefore you shall never come into judgment; your sins shall never be remembered, for your Saviour hath cast them all into the bottom of the sea, he hath removed them from you as far as the east is from the west, and hath given you for an everlasting possession, his justification and holiness, so that now no creature, either in heaven or in earth, shall be able to accuse you before the throne of the heavenly King.

Satan is now judged, he is now cast out from you; he hath no part in you; you are wholly given unto Christ, who will not lose you; your steadfast faith in him hath overcome that sturdy and bragging prince of the world; Christ hath given you the final victory over him and all

his army, that they shall never hurt you. What would you have more? O my dear heart, how great treasures are laid up in store for you, and how glorious a crown is already made and prepared for you!

And albeit the Holy Ghost bears witness of all these things in your heart, and makes you more sure and certain thereof, than if you had all the outward oracles in the world: yet I, being certainly persuaded and fully assured, by the testimony of God's Spirit in my conscience, of your eternal and sure salvation in our sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, have thought it good, yea and my bounden duty, not only at this time to write unto you, and to show my joyful heart in that behalf; but also by the word and commandment of Christ to pronounce and affirm in the name and word of the heavenly King Jehovah, and in the behalf of his sweet Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom all knees shall bow, whom all creatures shall worship; and also by the impulses of the Holy Ghost, by whose power and strength all the faithful are regenerate, I do, I say, pronounce to thee, my dear brother, T. V., that thou art already a citizen of heaven.

The Lord thy God, in whom thou dost put all thy trust, for his dear Son's sake, in whom thou dost also undoubtedly believe, hath freely forgiven thee all thy sins, clearly released all thine iniquities, and fully pardoned all thy offences, be they ever so many, so grievous, or so great, and will never remember them any more to condemnation. As truly as he liveth, he will not have thee die the death, but hath verily determined, purposed, and eternally decreed, that thou shalt live with him for ever. Thy sore shall be healed, and thy wounds bound up even of himself, for his own name's sake. He does not and will not look upon thy sins in thee; but he respects and beholds thee in Christ, in whom thou art lively grafted by faith in his blood, and in whom thou art most assuredly elected and chosen to be a sweet vessel of his mercy and salvation, and wast thereto predestinate in him before the foundation of the world was laid. In testimony and earnest whereof, he hath given thee his good and Holy Spirit, who worketh in thee faith, love, and unfeigned repentance, with other godly virtues, contrary to the corruption of thy nature.

Also he hath commanded me this day, although a most unworthy wretch, to be a witness thereof by the ministry of

his holy word, grounded upon the truth of his most faithful promises; the which thou believing, shalt live for ever. Believest thou this, my dear heart? I know well thou dost believe. The Lord increase thy faith, and give thee a lively feeling of all his mercies, whereof thou art warranted and assured by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, who confirm in thy conscience all that I have said, to the utter overthrowing of Satan, and those his most hurtful dubitations, whereby he is accustomed to molest and vex the true children of God: and by God's grace I will, as a witness thereof, confirm and seal the same with my blood, for a most certain truth.

Wherefore, my good brother, praise the Lord with a joyful heart, and give him thanks for this his exceeding great mercy, casting away all dubitation and wavering, yea all sorrow of heart, and pensiveness of mind; for this, the Lord your God, and most dear and loving Father, commands you to do by me, nay rather by his own mouth and word pronounced by me. But now, my dear brother, after that I have done my message, or rather the Lord's message indeed, I could find in my heart to write two or three sheets of paper, declaring the joy I bear in my heart for you, mine own beloved in the Lord; yet the time being so short, as you do well know, I am here constrained to make an end, desiring you to pardon my slackness, and to forgive my great negligence towards you, promising you still, that so long as my poor life doth last, my prayer shall supply what my pen doth want; as the Almighty God knoweth, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you and all others his dear children, as well as though I had rehearsed them by name, desiring them most heartily to remember me in their hearty and daily prayers, as I know right well they do; for I feel the daily comfort and commodity thereof, and therefore I neither will nor can forget them, nor you, nor any such like. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

Yours for ever unfeignedly, JOHN CARELES.

Still careful for you; prisoner for the testimony of God's everlasting truth, abiding his most blessed will and pleasure.

Pray, pray, pray, pray.

LETTER XVI.

*To my dear brother, Henry Adlington, prisoner in the Lollard's Tower.**

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, joy and comfort of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith, and lively feeling of his mercies, be most effectually wrought in your heart, my dear and faithful loving brother, Adlington, and in the hearts of all your other godly prison-fellows, to the full finishing of that good work, which the Lord hath most graciously begun in you; that the same may be to the advancing and setting forth of his glory, the commodity of his poor afflicted church, and to your own eternal joy and comfort in him. Amen.

My most dear and faithful loving brother in our Lord, I, with all the rest of my loving brethren here with me, do most humbly and heartily commend us unto you, with all faithful remembrance of you in our daily prayers, giving God earnest thanks on your most happy behalf, for that he hath given you such hearty boldness and christian constancy in the faithful confession of his everlasting verity. Blessed be God for thee, my dearly beloved brother, who hath vouched thee worthy of such great dignity, as to suffer for his sake, and the setting forth of his glory. Oh! glad in heart mayest thou be, to whom it is given, not only to believe in thy Lord and Christ most lively; but also to suffer for his sake, as one of his simple sheep appointed to the slaughter. Be of good comfort, therefore, my good brother, for your calling unto the cross of Christ was after a marvellous sort. Surely it was only the Lord's appointment, and therefore he will well perform his own work in and upon you, to the great magnifying of his glory, and comfort of your brethren; whose hearts are mightily refreshed to hear how heartily you have behaved yourself hitherto.

This present day I received a letter from you, at the reading whereof my brethren and I were not a little

* Henry Adlington was a sawyer of Grinstead, in Sussex, thirty years of age. He was one of the thirteen martyrs who were burned in the same fire at Stratford-le-Bow, June 27, 1556. Lollard's Tower was at the south-west corner of St. Paul's cathedral.

comforted, to see your conscience so quieted in Christ, and your continuance so steadfast in him; which things are the special gifts of God, not given unto every man, but to you his dear dearling, elect and chosen in Christ, and such as you are. And whereas you require to know my simple mind concerning your answer unto doctor Story and the chancellor; truly I say, you answered them very well; for there are but two sacraments indeed, that is to say, the sacrament of baptism, and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, as you have full well answered them. Praised be God for his good gifts, who chooses the weak to confound the strong, and the foolish to confound the worldly wise. If, when you come before them again, they ask you what a sacrament is, say you that a sacrament being ministered according to Christ's institution, is a visible sign of an invisible grace, and has the promise of God's mercy annexed unto it, available to all such as worthily receive it, and not unworthily worship it, as they would have us to do, contrary to God's commandment. And these properties belonging to Christ's true sacraments, cannot be applied unto any one of those five sacraments which they have invented of their own brain, since antichrist began to reign, to blind the people withal.

I perceive, dear heart, that upon Friday they intend to condemn you, and to give you your judgment. Therefore I think they will have no great reasoning with you, but bid you answer them directly, either yea or nay, to all such things as they have to charge you withal, which they have gathered of you since you came into their cruel hands. But if they will needs make many words with you, because you are but a simple man, and therefore perchance they will be the busier with you to trouble you with many questions, to cumber your knowledge, and then seem to triumph over you and that truth that you do hold; if, I say, they do this, as perhaps for some evil purpose they will, then be you as plain and as short as you can, saying roundly unto them these or such like words, as nigh as you can.

Be it known unto you, that I in all points do believe as it becomes a true christian, and as I have been truly taught in the days of that good king Edward, of such godly preachers and prophets sent of God, as have sealed their doctrine with their blood, from whom I will dissent in no point; for I am a poor man without learning, but

am commanded of God to follow the counsel of his constant preachers, and so do I intend to do, God giving me grace and assistance thereto. As for you, I know you to be none of Christ's shepherds, but ravening wolves, which come to kill and scatter the flock of Christ, as the Lord said you should; and he doth will us to beware of you and your poisoned doctrine, bidding us to judge you according to your fruits, whereby all men may see and know what you are, that will not be wilfully blind. But the good shepherds have given their lives for the defence of Christ's flock; and I am commanded to follow their faithful and godly example, and to confess with them one truth, even to the fire, if God shall see it good; and this as a true christian I have hitherto done, and henceforth by God's grace intend for to do. And if, for the same, God shall suffer you to take away my life, as you have done theirs, I am contented therewith; his will be done, for that only is good. But of this be you sure, the Lord will shortly call you to account for all the innocent blood that is shed within this realm; which you have brought into a most woful case, and made many a heavy heart in the same, and more I perceive you will make, so long as the Lord for our sins will suffer you to prosper, and until the time that your own iniquities be full ripe. But then be you sure the Lord will sit in judgment upon you, as well as you do now upon his saints, and will reward you according to your deservings; to whom, with my whole heart, I commit my cause, and he will make answer for me, when the full time of my refreshing cometh. In the mean space, I will keep silence with this that I have said, trusting that I have sufficiently discharged my conscience in confessing my faith and religion to you, declaring of what church I am, even of the catholic church of Jesus Christ, which was well known to be here in England in our late good king Edward's days, by two special tokens which cannot deceive me, nor yet suffer me to be deceived. That is to say, the pure preaching of his holy word, and the due administration of the holy sacraments; which is not to be seen in your Romish church, and therefore it cannot justly be called the church, and spouse of Christ. I believe in the holy Trinity, and all the other articles of the christian faith contained in the three creeds, and finally all the canonical scripture to be true in every sentence. And I detest all sects that divide themselves from the true church of Christ,

which is his mystical body, the ground and pillar of truth, and the very house of the living God. And if for these things you take away my life, and make yourselves guilty of my blood, you may, for I am in your hands as the sheep brought to the shambles, abiding the mercy of the butcher. And be you sure your judgment sleeps not, but when you cry, Peace, peace, and all is safe, then shall your plagues begin like the sorrow of a woman travailing with child, according to Christ's infallible promise.

This kind of answer, my dear heart, it shall be best for you to make; and by God's grace I intend to take the same order myself in time to come, when the Lord shall vouch me worthy of that great dignity, whereunto he hath called you. And if they shall laugh you to scorn, as I know they will, saying, Thou art a fool and an unlearned asshead, and art able to make answer to nothing, &c., care you not for it, but still commit your cause unto God, who will make answer for you, and tell them that they have been answered again and again by divers godly and learned men; but all will not help, for you have one solution of all manner of questions, even a fair fire and fagots, this will be the end of your disputations. Therefore I pray you to trouble me no more, but do that which you are appointed, when God shall permit the time. I am no better than Christ, his apostles, and others of my good brethren that are gone before me.

This kind of answer will cut their combs most and edify the people that stand by, so that the same be done coolly with sobriety, meekness, and patience: as I heard say our sweet brethren Thomas Harland and John Oswald did at Lewes in Sussex, to the great rejoicing of the children of God who were in those parts; and I hear say that they were dissolved from this earthly tabernacle at Lewes, on Saturday last, and were condemned but the Wednesday before, so that we may perceive the papists have quick work in hand, that they make such haste to have us home to our heavenly Father. Therefore let us make ourselves ready to ride in the fiery chariot, leaving these sorry mantles and old clokes behind us for a little time, which God shall restore unto us again in a more glorious wise.

My good brother Henry, you shall understand that bragging John T. hath beguiled his keepers, who trusted him too well, and is run away from them, and hath brought

the poor men into great danger by the same. The one of them is cast by the council's commandment, into the gatehouse at Westminster, the other is fled forth of the country for fear. Thus you may see the fruits of our free-will men, that made so much boast of their own strength. But that house which is not builded surely upon the unmovable Rock, will not long stand against the boisterous winds and storms, that blow so strongly in these days of trouble.

But, my dearly beloved brother, blessed be God for you and such as you are, who have played the parts of wise builders. You have digged down past the sand of your own natural strength, and beneath the earth of your own worldly wisdom, and are now come to the hard stone and unmovable rock, Christ, who is your only keeper; and upon him alone have you builded your faith most firmly, without doubting, mistrust, or wavering. Therefore neither the storms nor tempests, winds nor weathers, that Satan and all his wily workmen can bring against you, with the very gates of hell to help them, shall ever be able once to move your house, much less to overthrow it; for the Lord God himself, and no man, is the builder thereof, and hath promised to preserve and keep the same safe for ever. Unto his most merciful defence, therefore, I heartily commit you and all your good company, desiring him for his sweet Son Jesus Christ's sake, to confirm and strengthen you all, that you may be constant unto the very end; that after the final victory is once gotten, you may receive the immarcessible* crown of glory, of God's free gift, through his great mercy in Jesus Christ our only Saviour. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, power, praise, thanks, rule, and dominion for ever and evermore. Amen.

The blessing of God be with you all. JOHN CARÉLES.

LETTER XVII.

To my faithful and loving brother, William Aylesbury.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comforts of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling

* Unfading.

of his mercy, be with you, my dear and faithful loving brother, William Aylesbury, to the increase of his good gifts in you, and the full finishing of that which the Lord hath so graciously begun in you; that the same may be to the setting forth of his glory, the good of his poor afflicted church, and your own everlasting comfort in him. Amen.

Albeit, my dear heart in the Lord, at this very present time, my sorry, slow hand is something pestered with writing, to please my friends who daily call upon me for the performance of my promise and duty towards them, by the means whereof I cannot now write unto you in so ample manner as I fain would. Yet lest by my too long silence my great ingratitude for your love and godly letters should too much appear, I have here in haste scribbled these few words unto you, desiring you to accept the same in good part, until the Lord shall send me a more convenient time, to express my good will and bounden duty more largely unto you—promising you, in the mean space, that my poor prayer shall supply that which otherwise is wanting; as I trust you do not forget me in yours, for verily I have great need of it. My dear brother, I thank you most heartily for your godly, loving, and most comfortable letters, in which I do evidently perceive the precious gifts of God wherewith you are plentifully endued, the Lord be praised for you; and from the bottom of my heart I do reverence his Spirit in you. Wherefore, my good brother, be not negligent in the talent that God hath delivered unto you; but diligently apply the same, as I know well you do, that the Lord may receive his own with vantage,* and you the reward of a faithful servant at the time of his most joyful return. Truly I will not speak it to flatter you, neither would I provoke you to vain glory, but I will say, as I see just cause, that God has abundantly blessed you with the sweet knowledge and pure understanding of his holy word. Be always thankful unto God, I charge you, and humble and meek in your own sight, that God only may have all the glory from the bottom of your hearts. And look that you are very circumspect in all your life and conversation; that the light of your good works may so shine before men, that they may be occasioned to glorify your heavenly Father on your behalf.

Be diligent in your doings, and quick and trusty in all your Master's business that you go about, that by all means

* Increase.

you may do honour to the doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Remember that Satan now will have greater spite at you than at many others, because you are such a mortal enemy to his kingdom on every side. Therefore be you sure he will now lie biting at your heel, to see if he can give you a fall any manner of way, that he may make the truth of that godly doctrine which you constantly confess to be slandered by the means thereof. I know well that Satan's thoughts are not hid from you. I doubt not but you will be more circumspect than I can declare: notwithstanding, I thought it my bounden duty to warn you, as one whom I love as mine own soul, wishing you all the good I possibly can. Commend me unto my dear friend, John Manning, and thank him for his manifold kindness. I am much to blame for him; but if the Lord spare my life a little longer, I will write something to him for a remembrance when I am gone. Desire him to pray for me as I do not forget him. I have sent you your writings again with thanks. I pray you write me a copy of that concerning the Trinity, for I like it marvellous well, it is so brief and pithy. I have no leisure to write it, yet would I fain have it, as knoweth the Lord God, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, with my good brother, John Manning; that he with his grace and Spirit, will guide you both, with all the rest of his dear children, unto the end. Amen. The blessing of God be with you now and evermore. Amen.

Your own unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord. Pray, pray, pray.

LETTER XVIII.

A letter of John Careless to A. B. a faithful minister of the Lord, containing certain fruitful precepts of matrimony.

I beseech the same everlasting Lord, my dear and faithful brother, that blessed young Tobias with his wife Sarah, and brought them together in due time with reverence and fear, to preserve and bless you both, and your seed after you, that they may increase the number of the faithful by

thousands and thousands. And as the Lord of his great mercy and fatherly providence hath been always careful for you, and now hath for your comfort accomplished his good work in coupling you with a faithful mate; so see that you are thankful for his providence towards you, that it may every way in you be an increase of love and godliness, yea of christian joy and gladness in these sorrowful days, but yet so that you mourn with the true mourners of Zion, and be sorry, yet in measure, for the hurt of the same. Pray also in faith for her prosperity, that the Lord may build up the walls of Jerusalem again.

O that the Lord would turn the captivity of Zion as the river into the south, then should our hearts be made glad, and our mouths filled with laughter. Then would the heathen hypocrites say, The Lord hath done much for them. Oh, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof let us heartily rejoice and praise his name therefore. For though we now sow with tears, yet shall we be sure to reap with gladness; and as we now go forth weeping, bearing forth good seed, so shall we come again with joy, and bring our sheaves full of corn. Yea, the death of the martyrs, which is most precious in his sight, shall be the life of the gospel, spite of the papists' hearts.

Pray for me, dear heart, that I may be counted worthy to sow some seed amongst the sweet saints of the Lord, that I may reap the same again without ceasing, at the harvest. It is now sowing time of the year, men say in the country, and I think that I shall make an end of sowing before all March be past; for I hear say that I shall prove how my plough will enter into the stony ground of the hard-hearted papists, within these four days. I hope to hold fast and not to look back, neither for fear nor flattery, until I have made an end of sowing, and then will I set me down and rest me, and ask them all no leave, and look for the lively fruit and increase thereof with joy and gladness. My dear brother, the time approaches near, I praise God therefore, that I must put off this sinful tabernacle, and go home to my heavenly Father, where divers of my dear brethren are already looking and wishing for me. I beseech you, therefore, that you will help me forward with your faithful prayers, as I know you do, for I do feel the comfort and commodity thereof.

That you have observed my simple counsel, I am right

glad,* and I trust in the Lord God, you shall find comfort in the same. And that you may so do indeed, I have been so bold to write these few words unto you, because I shall see you no more in this corruptible life, therefore mark them well. First and above all things you must be very circumspect to keep the band of love, and beware that there never spring up the root of bitterness between you. If at any time there happen to rise any cause of unkindness between you, as it is impossible always to be free from it, see that you weed up the same with all lenity, gentleness, and patience, and never suffer yourself nor your wife to sleep in displeasure.

If you have cause to speak sharply, and sometimes to reprove, beware that you do not the same in the presence of others, but keep your words until a convenient time, which is the point of a wise man, saith Solomon, and then utter them in the spirit of meekness, and the groaning spirit of perfect love: which you must also let sometimes cover faults, and wink at them if they be not intolerable. Whatsoever loss and mischance shall happen unto you, take it patiently and bear it cheerfully; and though the same should come partly through your wife's negligence, yet let it rather be a loving warning to take heed in time to come, than a cause of sorrow for that which is past and cannot be holpen. I know by mine own experience, that we are in this life subject to many inconveniences, and that of nature we are prone to displeasure, and ready to think unkindness for every little trifle, and especially with our best friends, yea soonest with our loving wives, who are most loth to displease us.

But let us beware of this cankered corruption, and consider that we ought most of all, in love to bear with them, according to Christ's example towards his congregation, for whom he gave himself to cleanse it, &c. I had thought to have treated this matter at large, but even now I am interrupted and otherwise hindered. I doubt not but you know your duty therein a great deal better than I can declare it unto you, and as you know it so will do it: but I love to be bold with you. I intend to write also to your wife very shortly, and so take my last farewell of you for ever in this world. And thus in great haste I am now

* This counsel was that he should marry, notwithstanding certain hinderances whereby Satan sought to hinder his marriage. *Fox.*

constrained to make an end. The blessing of God be always with you.

Your own for ever,

JOHN CARELES.

Pray, pray, pray with faith.

LETTER XIX.

A letter of John Careless to Elizabeth, wife of the said A. B., containing likewise certain godly precepts of matrimony pertaining to her duty.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his most holy and mighty Spirit, with increase of knowledge, faith, and perfect feeling of God's eternal mercy, be with you, my dear and faithful loving sister, A. B., and with your godly loving husband, my dear and faithful brother, to the full performance of that good which he hath so graciously begun in you, that in all things you may be made rich and blessed in him, and your seed after you, now and ever. Amen.

As I have been long desirous to write unto you, my dear heart in the Lord, not only being thereto bound of duty, but also often provoked of him, to whom I owe myself and all that I am able to do, I mean even that blessed of the Lord's own mouth, whom God hath joined with you in that holy and christian state of matrimony, even so at the last I have obtained time and occasion in some part to perform that which I have long purposed. And forasmuch as the Lord, of his great mercy and fatherly care and providence over you his dear child, hath now graciously accomplished that good work amongst many others, which I, as a friend of the bridegroom, have full heartily wished and often prayed for; I think it good, yea, and my bounden duty, to treat of such things as may be profitable to preserve mutual love and faithful amity between you, which I know Satan will chiefly labour to diminish, if he cannot altogether destroy the same, lest by many joyful occasions you should be provoked continually to praise God for his good gift, which that enemy hath by all means sought to hinder from you.

As for all other things, I know you are sufficiently instructed, and also have a most godly learned companion,

who is well able further to teach you if need do require. But in this I know my experience is more than his. Therefore, my good sister, first and before all things see that you do diligently consider, that as every good and perfect gift, pertaining to soul and body, is given from above, and cometh from the Father of light; even so to whom soever the Lord dealeth any of his benefits, of them he doth chiefly require a heart always thankful for the same; for else he will either take away his good gifts again, or turn the same to their great discommodity, and in the end to the increase of their damnation—so detestable in his sight is the sin of ingratitude. But to such as are thankful for his benefits, he doth not only to the old ever add new, but also makes the benefits of his former gifts ever more and more to increase, until by them they are fully persuaded and thoroughly certified of his everlasting love in Christ Jesus, which is eternal life itself. So much does he of his great mercy delight in a thankful heart.

Therefore I do yet once again earnestly require you, that above all things you be thankful to God for his benefits—not only for your election, creation, redemption, and preservation, but also for his other temporal gifts, wherewith he hath endowed you; among which the chief and most excellent is, as testifies the Holy Ghost, your good, godly, and faithful loving husband. For, as the wise man saith, Goods and possessions may come to a man by the death of his friends, but a good wife is the gift of God, which the Lord will give for a good portion, to such as fear him.

And the like is of a good husband, as the Lord hath now given you, praised be his name therefore. He hath not given you an ignorant, froward, churlish, brawling, wasteful, rioting, drunken husband, wherewith he hath plagued many others, as he might also have done you, but he hath given you a most godly, learned, gentle, loving, quiet, patient, thrifty, diligent, and sober husband; by whom he will nourish, cherish, keep, and defend you, instruct and teach you, yea, care and provide for you and your children, to the which he will also by him give you, such things as be necessary for you. He hath not dealt so with every body; and yet he hath done this much more for you, my dear sister, and will thereto increase joy and love between you. For as he delights in the love and godly agreement of man and wife together, so is it he

only that makes them and all the whole household to be of one mind. Unto the which his gracious work he requires your diligence, and will use you as his instrument and mean, the more effectually to accomplish the same. And therefore I now require you to observe this my simple counsel, the which I have here written as a testimonial of my goodwill towards you, because I think in this life I shall never more see you.

Now, as I have showed you how you should be thankful unto God for his good gifts; so I exhort you, and, as much as in me lies, charge you to be evermore thankful unto your dear loving husband, who hath given himself unto you; who is a more precious jewel in the church of God, than perchance you are yet aware of. Think yourself unworthy to be matched with such an instrument of God: and also reverence evermore the gifts of God in him, and seek with true obedience and love to serve him, in recompense of his true and painful heart towards you. Be loth in any wise to offend him; yea, rather be careful and diligent to please him, that his soul may bless you. If at any time you shall chance to anger him, or to do or speak any thing that shall grieve him, see that you never rest until you have pacified him and made him happy again.

If at any time he shall chance to blame you without a cause, or for what you cannot do, which thing happeneth sometimes to the best men living, see that you bear it patiently, and give him no uncomely or unkind word for it; but evermore look upon him with a loving and cheerful countenance, and rather take the fault upon you, than seem to be displeased.

Be always merry and cheerful in his company, but not with too much lightness. Beware in any wise of swelling, pouting, or lowering, for that is a token of a cruel and unloving heart; except it be in respect of sin, or in the time of sickness.

Be not sorrowful for any adversity that God sendeth; but beware that nothing be spilt or go to waste through your negligence. In any wise see that you be quick and cleanly about his meat and drink, and prepare him the same according to his diet in due season. Go cleanly and well favouredly in your apparel, but beware of pride in anywise.

Finally, in word and deed show yourself wise, humble, cheerful, and loving towards him, and also towards such

as he doth love, and then shall you lead a blessed life. I could speak of many things which I have learned and proved true by experience; but I know that you will do in all things much better than I can teach you, because you have that anointing that teacheth you all things: who hath also given you a heart to obey, and serve him. Yet I trust you will not be offended for this, which I have written: but rather accept my goodwill towards you, whom I love in the Lord, as well as I do my daughter Judith.

Thus, as mine own soul, I commend you both to God; desiring him to bless you with all manner of spiritual blessings, in heavenly things, and also with the dew of heaven, and fatness of the earth, that in all things you may be made rich in Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour. The Lord increase and bless the fruit of your bodies, that your children may stand round about your table, thick, fresh, and lusty, like the olive branches. God give you both a long life, that you may see and bless your children's children, unto the third and fourth generation, and teach them the true fear and love of God, and that faith for which they shall be accepted in his sight.

God let you see the prosperity of Zion, for whose lying in the dust, let your hearts mourn. The Lord make perfect your love together in him, and always increase the same, and bring you both in peace to your graves, at a good age.* And now I bid you both heartily farewell; and I think I shall now take my leave of you for ever in this life. I beseech you both to aid me with your continual prayers, as I will not forget you in mine, that I may have a joyful victory through Jesus Christ. To whose most merciful defence, I do most heartily for ever commend you, to be kept unblameable until his coming; the which I beseech him to hasten for his mercy's sake.

Your own unfeigned,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord.

* Note that both these departed in quiet peace, the one A. D. 1565, the other in 1568. *Fox.*

LETTER XX.

To a faithful friend of his, by whom he had received much comfort in his trouble and affliction.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, with the eternal comfort of his sweet Spirit, be with you, my dear brother, now and ever. Amen.

Ah, my dear and faithful brother, what humble praise and hearty thanks am I bound continually to render unto God for you, in that he hath made you so worthy and comfortable an instrument unto me his most unworthy servant, in this time of my great conflict, not only against flesh and blood, but also against the spiritual power of darkness! In which wrestling, though I be very weak, yet have I, I thank God most heartily therefore, received such strength and comfort by your faithful prayers, and most godly and comfortable letters, that I am put in great hope, yea, in full assurance of a glorious victory. Blessed be the time that ever I knew you, for God, I perceive, hath made you an instrument in the stead of good master Bradford, to supple my soul with the oil of his mercy, by pouring into the same his most gracious promises. God for Christ's sake mollify my hard heart, and give me grace to believe them. O Lord, increase my faith. I believe, Lord, O help my unbelief, that I may taste and feel the certainty of my salvation, and be thoroughly persuaded, and assured that thy grace, good Lord, is sufficient for me. O pray, pray, dear heart, pray for me, and as you can, comfort me with more such sweet letters, that I may sometimes feel a flash of God's favourable countenance in my face, as doubtless I did at the reading of your last most comfortable letter. God verify your saying, or rather his saying by you, upon me for ever; and the same Lord will I continually beseech, to make you always plentifully to feel the fruition of his most gracious favour, that you may always plentifully pour forth upon me and all others that have need, the consolations of Jesus Christ. O that the time were now come, that I might put off this frail tabernacle of the flesh, in this heavenly security and quietness of conscience in Jesus Christ.

God make you, dear brother and all others his dear servants, to feel the like in your greatest need. Truly,

dear heart, I have seven most godly and comfortable letters of that blessed of the Lord, good master Bradford, which he wrote only for my comfort, when I signified my woeful state unto him, and though he has therein plentifully published the promises of God's mercy unto me, and sealed the same with his blood, yet Satan had blinded mine eyes, and put the same forth of my weak and frail memory, until your most happy letter came, yea, in a most happy hour may I say. But of this enough until another time. I am here constrained to break off from this which I have scribbled in haste, as this bearer can testify. Farewell in Christ, farewell I say, mine own dear heart in the Lord. The Lord our God bless you and increase his good gifts in you, to the setting forth of his glory, and to your continual comfort in him. Amen,

Your daily orator and poor brother,

JOHN CARELES.

Pray, pray.

LETTER XXI.

A letter of thanks to a faithful friend of his, by whom he had received much comfort in his inward troubles.

Blessed be God, the Father of all mercy, for the great comfort and christian consolation which he has so mercifully ministered unto my poor afflicted heart by your means, my most dear and faithful brother. Truly, methinks your words, or rather God's words uttered by you, have a wonderful power and efficacy, working in my heart at the hearing or reading of them. Rejoice, therefore, my dear brother, and be thankful unto God; for verily he both is, and will be, mightily magnified in you, and that divers and many ways, both to the strengthening of them that stand in his truth, and also to the raising up of such as are fallen from the same. God make me thankful for you, and on your behalf; for, verily, great is the goodness of God towards me, in giving me acquaintance in faithful love and amity with you: God's name for ever be praised therefore, and he perform all his merciful promises upon you, as I doubt not but he will, for his sake in whom you trust.

I thank my God most heartily, and also you, my good

brother, for that you are so careful for me in your faithful prayers, remembering my justly deserved sorrows, as though they were your own, and labouring so much to solace the same. Ah my gracious good God, what am I, for whom thou and thy dear children should be so careful? O sweet Lord, forgive me my great ingratitude and sin, and grant that I may never abuse thy great benefits. O let the love of thine elect, who love me for thy sake, be a sure sign and token, yea, a most firm testimony and seal to my sinful conscience, of thine everlasting love and mercy towards me in Christ; as verily it would and ought to be, if mine infidelity did not hinder it. O circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of my heart, that I may with lively faith behold thy great love towards me in all thine elect, that I may always be thankful for the same, and love thee and them again, most heartily and unfeignedly.

Ah my dear heart, how sweetly and how truly, yea, how godly and how comfortably have you rehearsed the sweet saying of Solomon concerning prosperity with true and godly friends. I will join with it the sentence which goeth a little before, for doubtless it may be well verified on you. A sure friend, saith the wise man, will be unto thee even as thine own soul, and deal faithfully with thy household folk. If thou suffer trouble and adversity, he is with thee, and hideth not his face from thee. A faithful friend is a strong defence; whoso findeth such a one, findeth a treasure. A faithful friend hath no equal; the weight of gold is not to be compared to the goodness of his faith. A faithful friend is a medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him, &c. Lo, my dear heart in the Lord, here is a lively image or description of you: for verily, such a one have I always found you unto me, not only sorrowing for my great sorrow, but also oftentimes making me joyful, with such joys as the world cannot feel. Now let the world brag of his feigned friendship; but I will boast of this true friendship in God, and esteem it a greater treasure than all transitory things. And as for my mourning, dear brother, God hath made you to turn it unto mirth; for God hath put you, instead of them, to be my comfort, whom he hath in his great mercy taken away. I trust henceforth to leave mourning for my great loss, and to praise God for gaining unto himself so great glory by his chosen children. God make me a true mourner of Sion, both for mine own sin and wickedness, and also to see his

honour defaced; that I may be made meet and apt to bear the joyful and comfortable message that your beautiful feet shall bring me. God bless thee, my dear heart and faithful loving brother, and increase his good gifts of grace in thee, as he hath most happily begun, that you may daily more effectually feel, and lively perceive, the certainty of God's grace, wherein you stand, and firmly testify the same to the conversion or confounding of all gainsayers, and to the comfort and confirmation of all God's dear children. Amen. Farewell mine own sweet brother, farewell as mine own heart.

Your own in Christ,

JOHN CARELES.

LETTER XXII.

*A letter of J. Careless to Agnes Glascock.**

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comforts of his most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit be with you, my dear and faithful sister Glascock, to the good performance of that good work which God hath so graciously begun in you, to his glory, the commodity of his poor afflicted church, and to your own eternal comfort in him. Amen.

In our Lord, I have my most humble and hearty commendations unto you, my dear sister, and most faithful mother Glascock, with all remembrance of you in my daily prayers, giving God most hearty laud, praise, and thanks for you, and on your behalf, in that he, of his great mercy, hath hitherto so mightily strengthened you, constantly to cleave unto your Captain Christ, notwithstanding the great assaults and manifold temptations that you have had to the contrary. Doubtless, dear heart, it cannot be expressed what joy and comfort it is unto my very soul, to see how mightily the Lord hath magnified himself in you, and others his dear elect darlings, whom he will shortly glorify with himself, as he hath done others of his sweet

* Agnes Glascock, through infirmity and her husband's persuasion, was allured to go to mass; for which cause, she, falling into great sorrow and repentance, was raised up again by the comfortable letters of William Tyms and John Careless; and after that was constant in the sincere profession of the verity, and in danger for the same of persecution; unto whom John Careless wrote therefore this letter. *Fox.*

She lived at Hockley, in Essex, of which town Tyms was curate.

saints, that are gone before you. Rejoice therefore and be glad; for verily you have good cause if you diligently consider the great dignity that God hath called you unto, even now in your old age, to be one of his worthy witnesses unto the world, and I think you shall, with me and others your brethren in bonds, seal the Lord's verity with the testimony of your blood. Surely, sweet sister, this is the greatest promotion that God can bring you or any other unto in this life; and an honour that the highest angel in heaven is not permitted to have.

Therefore, happy are you, O faithful daughter of Abraham, that the Lord will now prefer you before many others, yea, or any other, of your age, that I do know in England. Oh faithful and virtuous matron, who wilt not be moved from the sure Rock Christ, upon whom you have so firmly built your house, that neither storms nor tempests, neither yet hell gates, nor any other temptations, shall ever be able once to prevail against it. Full well does it appear by your constant continuance, that you have played the part of a wise builder, in counting the cost beforehand, belonging to the finishing up of your tower. And I doubt not but, through God's gift, you have sufficient to the performance thereof; so that the hypocrites of their part shall have no just cause to triumph against you, or to mock you, saying, Lo, this woman began to build, but is not able to make an end. Therefore go on boldly and fear not; for God is faithful, as St. Paul saith, who will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, but either he will give you grace and strength to stand unto the death, which is the gate and entrance into life, or else he will make such an outscape for you, as shall be to the setting forth of his glory, the which, above all other things, we that are his chosen children ought to seek, yea, even with the loss of our own lives, being yet well assured, that the same shall not be shortened one minute of an hour before the time that God hath appointed.

Cast, therefore, dear sister, all your care upon the Lord, who, as St. Peter saith, careth for you. Great is his providence for you, and mighty is his love and mercy towards you. With his grace he will defend you, and with his Holy Spirit he will evermore guide you; wherewith he hath surely sealed you unto the day of redemption: he hath also given you the same in earnest, for the recovery of the purchased possession, which he hath prepared for

you before the foundation of the world was laid. Be strong, therefore, and take a good heart, as I hear say you do. God for ever be blessed for you, who hath so grafted his love in your good heart that nothing is able to separate you from the same, but will rather choose to suffer adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a little season. Oh happy woman, that canst find in thine heart to esteem the rebukes of Christ to be greater riches than all the treasures of the world, as good Moses did. Doubtless, great is your reward in heaven; which you shall shortly receive of his free gift, and not of any deserving.

Thus, dear mother Glascock, I have been bold to trouble you with my rude and simple letters, desiring you to take them in good worth, being done in great haste, as appears, but yet proceeding from a poor heart, which flows over in love towards you, as my daily prayers for you can testify; which, I trust, shall supply that part of my duty towards you, which my pen now wanteth. I thank you, dear heart, for all your loving tokens, and for the great kindness you have hitherto showed unto my poor brother Tyms, and his wife and children, with all other of God's people, to whom you daily do good. The Lord recompense the same sevenfold into your bosom, as I doubt not but he will, according to his infallible promises. I pray you have my hearty commendations unto your husband. I beseech the Lord strengthen him in the confession of his truth, as my trust is that he will, that we may all joyfully rest with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God: unto the which he bring us, who, with his most precious blood, hath bought us. The blessing of God be with you now and ever. Amen.

Your daily orator and unfeigned lover,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord. Pray, pray, pray.

LETTER XXIII.

A brief admonition written to mistress Agnes Glascock, in a book of hers, when she came to the prison to visit him.

There is nothing that the holy scripture throughout doth so much commend unto us, as a true faith and steadfast trust in

the promises of God's eternal mercies towards us in Jesus Christ. For from the same, as forth of the chief fountain and well-spring of life, flow all kinds of virtues and godly fruits, especially true love towards God, in which we ought purely to serve him all the days of our life; and also christian charity towards our neighbours, as well to help them at all needs, as also not to hurt them by any means. Therefore pray earnestly for the increase of faith and lively feeling of God's mercy; for all things are possible unto him that can undoubtedly believe. Faith is that which assures us of God's mercy, and whereby we vanquish all the fiery darts of the devil; our victory that overcometh the world; the knife that kills and mortifies the flesh; and finally, that which sets us at peace with God, and quiets our consciences always before him, and makes us merry and joyful under the cross, with many more things than I can now express. Pray, therefore, for faith, in faith. And for the Lord's sake beware of popery and popish idolatry, the idol of the wicked mass, and other idolatrous service. Make not your body, which is a member of Christ, a member of antichrist. Remember that we shall receive of God according to that we do in the body, be it good or evil. Therefore glorify God, in your body, which is dearly bought. Betray not the truth, lest the Lord deny you. If God be God, follow him. You cannot serve two masters. I write not this as doubting you, but by the way of admonition. God keep you from all evil.

LETTER XXIV.

Another letter of John Careless to mistress A. Glascock, to comfort her in her repentance, after she had been at mass; fruitful for all them to read which have fallen, and are to be raised up again.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ: the eternal comforts of his sweet Spirit be with you, and strengthen and comfort you, my dear and faithful sister. Amen.

Although the perilous days be come, whereof Christ prophesied, that, if it were possible, the very elect should be deceived; yet let the true faithful christians rejoice and be glad, knowing that the Lord himself is their keeper, who will not suffer one hair of their heads to perish without his

almighty goodwill and pleasure; neither will suffer them to be further tempted than he will give them strength to bear: but will, in the midst of their temptation, make a way for them to escape out; so good and gracious a God is he to all his chosen children. And though sometimes he let his elect stumble and fall, yet, no doubt, he will raise them up again to the further increase of their comfort, and to the setting forth of his glory and praise. Which thing, my dear and faithful loving sister, I trust shall be well verified on you. For I do hear say that by the manifold allurements, enticements, procurements, yea and enforcements that you, dear heart, have had, your foot hath chanced to slip forth of the way, to the great discomfort of your soul, and the heaviness of your heart. But, my good sister, be of good cheer, for the Lord will not so leave you, but he will raise you up again, and make you stronger than ever you were; so that your fall shall turn to his glory and your profit. For if you had not by this proved the experience of your own strength, or rather your own weakness, you would have stood too much in your own conceit, or perchance have gloried in yourself, and so have despised and condemned other weak persons that have committed the like offence. Therefore now you may see what the best of us all can do, if God leave us to ourselves. Which ought to move you to be diligent to call earnestly upon God for his grace and the strength of his Holy Spirit, without which we are not able to stand one hour, and to be most thankful for the same when you have it, and then to be more circumspect in time to come.

Therefore, dear sister, seeing that you have done otherwise than the word of God and your own conscience would allow, yet, dear heart, do not think that God therefore will cast you clean away, but know that he hath mercy enough in store for all them that truly repent and believe in him, although the sins of them were as many in number as the sands in the sea, and as great as the sins of the whole world. It is a greater sin to mistrust the mercy and promises of God, than to commit the greatest offence in the world. Therefore, good sister, beware in any wise that you do not once mistrust the promises of God's mercy towards you; but know for a very surety that all your sins are utterly forgiven you for Christ's sake, be they ever so many, so grievous, or so great.

But now, dear heart, take heed and beware that you do

not cloak that sin and increase the same daily, in communicating with the wicked in their idolatry, and devilish doings at their den of thieves. Do not, I say, dear sister, come at any of their antichristian service, lest, by little and little, you utterly lose a good conscience, and at length esteem it for no offence: as alas, a great number do at this day, to the great peril of their souls. The Lord be merciful to them, and give them grace to repent in time, and turn to the Lord, and then they shall be sure to find mercy at the Lord's hand, as doubtless you have done, praised be his name therefore.

Ah my dear sister, you may now see the words of Christ verified upon yourself, that a man's greatest foes shall be they of his own household, for your husband has gotten you to do that which all the tyrants in the world could never have made you to do. Doubtless he may be sorry for it. God give him grace to repent, or else, without doubt, it will be laid to his charge one day, when he would not by his will hear it for all the goods in the world. Well, I think my brother Tyms will write him a letter shortly that shall touch his conscience, if he have any conscience at all.

But now again to you, dear sister. The thing that is done cannot be undone, and you are not the first that hath offended, neither are you so good and so holy as others that have at a time slipt forth of the way. Therefore I would not have you be so much discomforted as I hear say you are, as though God were not as able to forgive you your offence, as he was to forgive his dear saints, that offended him in times past; or as though God were not as merciful now as ever he was. Whereas, in very deed, there is with the Lord, as the prophet saith, mercy and plentiful redemption, and his mercy far surmounts all his works; and he never faileth any that put their whole trust and confidence in him, how great an offender or how wicked a trespasser soever he be. No, he maketh their falls and backslidings many times to turn to their profit and benefit, and to the setting forth of his glory; as doubtless, dear sister, yours shall do, if you put your whole faith, hope, and trust, only in his infinite and eternal sweet mercies.

Oh what a subtle, crafty, lying serpent is that Satan, our old enemy, who, when he sees that he cannot make us to continue in our wickedness to do him service, would then bring us into a doubting and mistrusting of the mercy of

God, which is the greatest offence that can be; yea, infidelity is the root and original of all other sins. Therefore, my sweet sister, give no place to that cruel adversary of mankind, who hath been a liar and a murderer from the beginning, but steadfastly believe the Lord, who hath sent you word by me, his most unworthy servant, that all your sins be pardoned, forgiven, and clean released for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Lord and Saviour. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, thanks, power, rule, and dominion for ever and for ever. Amen. Farewell, my dear sister, and be of good cheer. Believe in the Lord, and you shall live for ever. The Lord increase your faith. Amen. Amen.

Your poor brother and daily faithful orator,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord. Pray for me.

LETTER XXV.

*To my dear and faithful brother, Augustine Bernher.**

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the help, comfort, and assistance of his eternal Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful brother Augustine, and with all the rest of my good brethren and sisters of the houses of Baxterley and Mancetter, which mourn for the misery of God's people, to your everlasting consolation in him. Amen.

Right glad I am to hear, my dear and faithful brother Augustine, that God, of his great mercy and infinite goodness, hath yet so graciously delivered and preserved you out of your enemies' hands, beseeching Almighty God also, from the bottom of my heart, to be your continual defence unto the end, as hitherto he has most graciously been, that you may live and die, both to God's glory, the advantage of his church, and to the increase of your own everlasting joy and comfort in him.

Know you, dear brother, that I have received your letter, for which I heartily thank you. Indeed I think it very short, although it seems something sharply to rebuke

* Augustine Bernher was a Swiss minister who attended for many years upon Latimer. During the persecutions of queen Mary's reign, he was very active in visiting the families of the martyrs, and communicating with those who were in prison for the truth's sake.

me in the beginning, for the breach of my promise, in not writing to you this long time. Well brother, I am content to bear it with patience, considering that you are troubled otherwise, the Lord comfort you and all heavy hearts, neither will I spend ink and paper for clearing myself in this point. God he knoweth whether I be so mindless of my promise as it appears in your sight I am. Your request I will truly perform to the uttermost of my power, as gladly as any poor wretch shall do in the world, and I thank God I have done no less of long time. And as my poor prayer shall be a handmaid to wait upon you which way soever you ride or go, so I beseech you that my simple counsel may take some place in you, in this time of your pilgrimage, which you pass in no small peril. God keep and preserve you for his name's sake.

I do not disallow, but much praise and commend your hearty boldness in putting yourself into the conflict, when any one of God's people needeth your help in any point. But yet I would not have you thrust yourself into danger, when you can do them no good, or, at least, when they may well enough spare that good you would do them: for if you should then happen to be taken, you shall not only be no comfort unto them, but also a great discomfort, adding sorrow unto their sorrow.

I do not persuade you to absent yourself from any place where your presence or necessity is required; for, in all such places I know God will preserve you, as he hath hitherto wonderfully done, praised be his name therefore; or if it shall please him to permit you in any such place to be taken, I know he will most sweetly comfort your conscience with this consideration, that it is the very providence and appointment of God that you should there and then be taken up for a witness of his truth unto the world. But I cannot allow, nor be contented that you should rashly or negligently thrust yourself into that place where your wicked enemies do continually haunt you, and lay wait for you, when no necessity of yourself nor of any other of God's people requires your company. If they need any of your godly counsel, you may write unto them that which you think good; which, I dare say, will be sufficient unto them. For, continual thanks and praises be given unto the everlasting God, there is none of those that are cruelly condemned for God's truth, that now are weaklings; for they have manfully passed through the pikes, and they

have boldly abided the brunt of the battle, and therefore I reckon the worst is past with them already. So that now and then a godly letter from you to them, shall do as much good as your company shall do, and perchance more too; for writing sticketh longer in the memory than words do, yea though your letters were as short to them as your last was to me, so that the same be something sweeter, and not altogether so sharp.

This, dear brother, is the simple counsel which I would gladly have you observe, partly, for that I heartily pray for your preservation to the good of Christ's church, and partly for that I unfeignedly wish the peace, comfort, and tranquillity of your own conscience, which I know will be quickly ready to accuse you, if you do any thing wherein you have not the word of God for your warrant. For, as in a glass that is clear, a small mote will soon appear; even so the good conscience of God's chosen children, being more clear than crystal, will quickly accuse them, at the least fault they commit; whereas, the wicked worldlings have their consciences so clogged and corrupted through the custom of sin, that they cannot once see or perceive their own shameful deeds and wicked works, until God set the same before them for their utter destruction, and then they despair immediately. But, seeing that God has given you a clear conscience, and a pure, sharp, quick, and lively sight in your soul, I would wish you to beware that you do nothing unadvisedly; but upon a good ground. For an accusing conscience is a sore thing when death approaches, and then Satan will not stick to tell you that you have too much tempted God, when, peradventure, you have not done so at all. For this cause, I say, partly I have thought it good to admonish you, as I have done often, to be circumspect, according to the counsel of Christ, who biddeth you to beware of men. Other things I have not to write, for I know this bearer can certify you of all things at large, better than I can declare it by writing.

I beseech you, good Augustine, help me forwards with your hearty prayers, for I trust I have but a small time to tarry in this troublesome world. Doctor Story told our marshal that we should all be despatched so soon as he came from Oxford, whither he and other bloody butchers are gone to make slaughter of Christ's sheep, that lie there appointed to be slain.* God, for Christ's sake, put them

* The burning of Ridley and Latimer.

and such like besides their cruel purpose, if it be his good will and pleasure: Amen, good Lord. I pray you do my most hearty commendations to my dear sister and faithful friend, good mistress Mary Glover. I beseech God be her comfort, as I doubt not but he is. I am very glad to hear that she so joyfully and so patiently bears this great cross that God hath laid upon her. I pray God strengthen her, and all other his dear saints unto the end. Amen. Commend me unto my dear and faithful sister Elizabeth B. I thank her most heartily for my napkin, and so I do your dear brother for my shirt. Truly that day that we were appointed to come to our answer before the commissioners, who had sent word the same morning that they would come to the King's Bench by eight of the clock, and the house and all things were trimmed and made ready for them, I got that shirt on my back and that napkin in my hand, and methought they did help to harness me, and weapon me well to go fight against that bloody beast of Babylon. And trust me truly, if they had come, I would have stricken three strokes the more for your two sakes, as well as God would have enabled me to have set them on, as, by God's grace, I will not fail to do at the next skirmish that I come to. Wherefore, I pray you, pray for me, that I may be strong and hardy to lay on good load. O that I might so strike him down, that he should never be able for to rise again. But that stroke belongs only unto the Lord to strike at his coming, the which I trust will be shortly. O hasten it good Lord, and shorten these sorrowful and sinful days, for thy great mercies' sake.

Farewell my dear and faithful brother. The Lord defend, keep, and preserve you from the power of your enemies, visible and invisible, and send us a most joyful meeting here or elsewhere, as it shall please his goodness to appoint us.

In the mean space I shall most earnestly desire you to pray for me, for I never had more need in my life, and, doubtless, you shall never want my poor prayer, if it shall please God to accept the prayer of so sinful a wretch as I am. The Lord impute not my sins to me, for Jesus Christ's sake: unto whose most merciful defence I do most heartily commit you. The blessing of God be with you now and ever. Amen. I pray you do my most hearty commendations unto master John Glover. I do not forget

him in my daily prayers, and I trust he remembers me. Your poor brother, always mindful of you in my prayers,

JOHN CARELES,
prisoner, abiding God's pleasure.

LETTER XXVI.

*To my dear friend and faithful sister, Mary Glover.**

The same everlasting God and most gracious good Lord, that blessed Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and comforted them in all their crosses, troubles, and manifold afflictions; yea, and preserved them and provided for them in all extreme peril, danger, and necessities; bless, comfort, preserve, and keep you, with all your sweet children and family, my dear friend and faithful sister in the Lord, good mistress Mary Glover, with, and by the power of his holy and mighty Spirit, our eternal Comforter now and for ever more. Amen.

Ah my dear friend, what shall I say, or how shall I comfort you in this great cross that God has laid upon you, in taking home to himself those his blessed saints whom he for a time lent you? Verily I am afraid lest I shall renew your sorrows in speaking of them. But, my dear heart, let that be far from you; rather now with them rejoice in God for their great glory, triumph, and victory, ever submitting with all meekness, your will unto his, which only is good and works all things best for you, of which if you be fully and thoroughly persuaded, you can by no means lack spiritual joy and comfort, whereof in few words I will something say, although I doubt not but you know it already, though perhaps now sorrow doth a little darken the same, as at times it has done in many good men. But faith is of such force and power, if it be unfeigned, that it will with Jonah from the whale's belly, cry unto the Lord, and bring from him the comforts of his Spirit and promises, which chiefly consist in that which is rehearsed in the first commandment, Hear Israel, saith the Lord, I

* There were three brothers named Glover. An order was sent for the apprehension of John Glover, the elder brother, but he not being found, Robert, then sick in bed, was apprehended in his stead, and afterwards burned. John Glover, after several narrow escapes, died of an illness, contracted by lying concealed in the woods. William, the younger brother, also died shortly after, and their bodies were forbidden the rites of sepulture. Mary was the wife of Robert.

am thy Lord God, and thou shalt love me, &c. Behold with a steadfast and lively faith this sweet saying and commandment of God. He bids us hear and give credence. To what I pray you? Forsooth that he, of his goodness, hath given himself wholly unto us, to be our own peculiar and proper possession for ever, as the prophet David pleasantly sings: The Lord himself is my portion; my lot is fallen unto me in a happy ground, &c. O gracious God, what a thing is this, that the great Lord Jehovah, that omnipotent God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein, upon whose providence all things do depend, at whose only beck, both angel and devil must be fain to obey.—Oh what a thing is this, that he will vouchsafe to give himself wholly to be ours, with all that ever he may be! Oh what are we most vile earth and ashes, yea, most wicked caitiffs and horrible sinners, that he would vouch us worthy of this great benefit, which cannot be expressed with the tongues of men or angels! This must we now needs think and believe of God, or else we do most wickedly transgress the great and first commandment.

But do we obey and believe that this is true? So shall we of force by the same be constrained to fulfil the second part, that is to say, to love him with all our heart, &c. For who, seeing the goodness of God towards him in Jesus Christ, for whose sake only he has given himself wholly, to be ours in most large and ample wise that may be, who, I say, seeing this, would not with all his heart, soul, and mind, love the Lord again, and of love, not only leave the doing of such things as might displease him, but also be ready and willing to do whatsoever is acceptable in his sight? Yea, most gladly and joyfully suffer whatsoever he will appoint us to do for his sake, knowing assuredly that nothing can come unto us, no not the diminishing of one hair of our heads, without his good will, pleasure, and merciful appointment, and that he, loving us so well that he would give his Son himself, the Holy Ghost, and finally all other things in Christ, to us, will not appoint anything unto us otherwise than shall be to the setting forth of his glory, and our everlasting benefit. This great, abundant, bottomless love and mercy of God, did holy St. Paul deeply feel, when he made that bold proclamation in the latter end of the eighth chapter to the Romans, saying, Who is it, or what is it, that shall be able

to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Read the whole chapter oftentimes, I beseech you.

Thus, dear heart, you see the eternal love and fatherly care and providence of God towards you. In respect whereof I trust you do not only cast all your care upon him; but also most lovingly obey him in all his holy ordinances, evermore meekly submitting your will unto his, in all and every thing, knowing that the same will make all things turn to your good, and that without his pleasure a poor sparrow shall not perish in the fowler's net; much less you, or your dear husband, your good uncle M. Latimer, or any of yours. Let this faith and godly persuasion evermore be firm in your heart without doubting or wavering: for without it all that ever you go about is in vain. Yea without this faith in God, you cannot please him; you cannot commit and betake yourself wholly unto him; you cannot truly fear him; you cannot love him indeed, you cannot call upon him or heartily pray unto him, neither yet praise him aright. Therefore let this be your only and continual endeavour, to be confirmed more and more of this, that God is your own most dear loving Father through Christ, that he has a most tender care over you and for you, as always he has had and ever will have, both in soul and body, for this life, and for eternal life, howsoever things have or shall happen to appear unto you. According to this your faith, and as you believe, so shall it be unto you. And as you think God to be unto you, so shall you feel him. Think therefore sweetly of the Lord and of his goodness, and thank him most heartily that ever he would vouch you worthy to sustain the loss of your chief treasures in earth for his sake; and that he would ever give you anything to bestow for his love. And as you praise the Lord for his great mercies and manifold benefits so largely given unto you before many others, so do you faithfully pray unto him that he will continue his loving kindness towards you, and keep you blameless through love in Christ, unto the end: Yea, and make you worthy, strong, and able to suffer the loss of your own life for the testimony of his truth, which, as your good uncle said to me once, and your dear husband full often, is the greatest promotion and dignity that God can bring us unto in this life, yea it is an honour which the highest angels in heaven are not permitted to have. And in this your

hearty and faithful prayer, I do most humbly require you to remember me a most miserable wretch, I fear me, not counted worthy to become one of his constant witnesses unto the world in such sort as I would fain be. Pray for me, my dear heart, pray for me, as I will never forget you nor your blessed children so long as I am in this prison of the body. Commend me unto Hugh Glover, Marmaduke, and to their younger brother and sister. The Lord God comfort and bless them, and pour his good Spirit upon them, wherewith their good father was plentifully endued. I pray you do my hearty commendations unto my brother Augustine and his wife, and I heartily thank you for your goodness towards them. Desire them also to pray for me, for now the needful time approaches. I praise God I am more hearty than ever I was, and so I beseech him to make you all to be.

I have many things more to say, but I am constrained to make an end; all my doings come to an end with extremity. God grant that I may enter into his glory through the strait gate, though I struggle and strive, thrusting among the press with great violence. I beseech you yet once again, and all my dear friends in God, to aid and strengthen me with your prayers, as I will never forget any of you, so long as this wrestling life of mine does last: as God knoweth, to whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you and all yours. The sweet blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.

Your daily and most bounden orator,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord, pray, pray for me in faith.

LETTER XXVII.

*To the faithful in the city of London.**

Unto all the faithful flock of Jesus Christ within the city of London, which fear God unfeignedly and seek to serve him in such holiness and righteousness as is acceptable in his sight, John Careless wishes the eternal peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comfort of his most Holy Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of his mercy, now and evermore. Amen.

When I had with myself well weighed and considered,

* Some passages and expressions in this letter are omitted.

right worshipful citizens, the great charge and burden that you have borne and been at, not only with me, who am most unworthy of your liberal benefits, but also with many others the poor afflicted people of God, ever since the time that tyranny last broke loose in this miserable land, &c. I was even ashamed, and in conscience confounded, to think of my great sloth and negligence, yea ingratitude and unthankfulness towards you, in not sowing some of these spiritual gifts which God hath given me, amongst you, of whom I have reaped so manifoldly temporal benefits.

God, for his dear Son's sake, forgive me my great sin that in this point I have committed against both him and you, desiring you also to do the same, and I will promise you, by God's grace, if he spare my life, I will henceforth better perform my duty towards you; my poor prayer always supplying that which otherwise I am not able to perform. And in testimony thereof, I have here written unto you this simple admonition, the which I think will be my leave-taking of you, and my last farewell in this corruptible life, as by many likelihoods doth appear; wherefore I beseech you all to accept it in good part, as a sign and token of some part of my good will towards you. But what shall I write unto you, or whereof shall I entreat, that you do not already perfectly know? You have had the pure word of God plentifully preached amongst you, yea and the same sealed, praised be God therefore, with good store of blood. You have also the blessed bible, and all other good books of godly men's doings, among you, so that I think you are ignorant of nothing that pertains to the life of a perfect christian. Therefore I will not here take upon me to teach you anything, since I know that the most part of you perceive the mind of God, as much or more than I do. But I will now most humbly pray you, and heartily beseech you, and that by the mercifulness of God in Jesus Christ, and as we shall all assemble shortly before him, that you will in no wise do contrary to your knowledge, lest your own conscience become also a swift witness at the great day against you. I will not meddle with secret matters, but speak of those things which are too apparent, and yet not of all, but namely of one; which as it seems to be least regarded amongst you, so am I sure the same is yet most horrible and odious in the sight of God; that is to say, the being present with the papists at any of their antichristian and idolatrous service, which is not only

a wicked dissembling of your faith, and a very outward denial of the gospel of God, but also a manifest committing of idolatry with the wicked, and deeply deserves God's heavy wrath and displeasure, which is not far off, unless you heartily repent in time, and turn to the Lord, coming clean away from that filthiness, as he lovingly calls you.

Ah my dear hearts, what shall I say to you, or how shall I temper my pen to persuade you. All the godly preachers that in times past have taken pains amongst you, have fully agreed and wholly concluded, yea, and by the holy scriptures plainly proved, that it is not lawful for any of you to be personally present with the papists at any part of their antichristian service. This have they truly taught you, this have they largely and learnedly written unto you; and this have they most godly confirmed with their blood before you. What would you have more? Yea many a faithful heart hath followed them, and to their power done the like, and yet, alas, all will not now serve. How happens this, my dear friends of London, that neither the loving admonitions of all God's good prophets, nor the earnest warnings of his dear witnesses and worthy martyrs, will take any place amongst you? Do you think that they have not told you the truth, but some dream or vain tale that shall not come to pass? Do you think that they did but dally with you to delude you, and to make you afraid of a vain shadow, when no need of fear was? Certainly you shall find it otherwise shortly if you so think, as you may see if you will, by experience of that which is already come to pass, even as they truly told you in their preaching, or rather prophecy for your forewarning. Be you sure the Lord is no less mighty to perform his word pronounced by these his forerunners, before his latter coming, than he was true to pour forth his plagues upon the Jews, prophesied both by John Baptist and others his forerunners, before his first coming. Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Rogers, Bradford, Saunders, with the rest of their blessed brethren that are fled or burned, are as well to be believed in this point, as Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or John Baptist in those things that they warned the world of. It is all one word they all have preached, and in the power of one Spirit, that they have ministered. And as verily as they were the Lord's messengers to Israel for that age; so surely were these latter sort the Lord's ministers to warn England for this age, and I fear the last that ever shall be sent unto it.

But I ask again, How happens it, that you, pretending to be of the flock of Christ, do not now hearken to the voice of your head pastor Christ, pronounced by his servants, to obey and follow it? Verily I fear me, because you are but wild goats, and none of Christ's true elect sheep. For if you were Christ's sheep indeed, you would surely give more regard to the voice of your Shepherd speaking in his godly preachers, and not presume to follow strangers, as I hear say you do, which entice you to wickedness, and backlooking from the plough on which you had once laid hand; but Christ biddeth you remember Lot's wife.

I hear say that there is amongst you now-a-days a sort of worldly wise men, whose doings will prove foolishness before God one day, without doubt, who have so diligently sought the scripture that they have found out that which none of our good preachers ever could do, although their whole study was only therein day and night. And what is that? Forsooth, as some say, they have found there, that it is permitted and lawful for christian men who know the truth, to be present with papists at their antichristian and idolatrous service; and that they may cloak their knowledge and dissemble their faith, and seek what shifts they can, to save their life, lands, and goods, so that they do not utterly deny the truth in their hearts, or by express words, in the way of recanting! Ah, have they so? But, with your leave, I will now awhile talk with these worldly wise divines, who have found out this hidden mystery, I might say, of iniquity, well enough. I pray you, my masters, where do you find that any faithful christian may dissemble the profession of his Master's religion, to frame and fashion himself like unto the wicked world, whereout the Lord hath chosen him to serve him in spirit and truth? You find it belike in the bottom of your bags of gold and silver, for in God's bible book, I am sure you find it not, but altogether the contrary. You hear there how God bids you not to bear a strange yoke with the unbelievers, but to come out from amongst them, and to separate yourselves from them; but many men's hearing will not serve them on that side. You hear there also, that God will cast out such lukewarm gentlemen as are neither hot nor cold, forth of his mouth; but I think you do not believe it. Well I say no more, but mark the end of this. I will not deny but that you may wring and wrest some places of the holy scripture contrary to all the rest, to make them seem

among the simple or carnal as though they served for your purpose; and even so may the rankest heretic in the world do to establish his heresy. But surely in the end such rakers shall receive a heavy reward, which will be a great deal sooner than they expect, let them make as light of the matter in the mean space as they list.

Ah what a great grief is this, and how greatly to be lamented in these our woeful days, that so many who bear the name of christians, unto whom it has pleased the Lord of his great goodness and infinite mercy to reveal the blessed knowledge of his holy and sincere word, and thereto has opened the eyes of their minds, and illuminated their understanding, whereby they do perceive, as well what is pleasant and acceptable in his sight, as also what is abominable and detestable in the same; do yet, that notwithstanding, not only leave the good which they ought with all their endeavour to have done, but also with a wicked boldness they commit that evil which they ought in no wise to have done. That is, whereas they ought by all godly means to have encouraged their christian brethren and sisters to be strong in the Lord, and boldly to confess Christ, bearing his cross also with joy and patience, and to avoid all detestable idolatry, superstition and wickedness, which is the right occupying of their talent, and the very end whereto God has given them the same—they do contrariwise as much as in them lies. And both by word and wicked example, they discourage their weak brethren and sisters from the bold confession of Christ's verity, that they should not with joy and patience bear Christ's sweet cross.

Is not this a sweet kind of gospelling to the senses of the carnal man, to come and tell him who is somewhat fearful and worldly minded, that he may by the word of God lawfully go to church, and do all things outwardly as the papists, only let his heart be towards God, and all shall be well enough. Yea and so he may live and be quiet, and save his lands and goods, and do much good another way many a day to come, when the gospel shall come again, &c., and, to make the bait something more sweet and more subtle to deceive, to garnish the same with divers sayings and examples out of the holy scriptures, which at the first blush, before they are well weighed, seem to make something for your purpose. Think you, I say, that this is not a sweet sleight of the subtle serpent, whereby to deceive the simple

souls of carnal and wavering-minded men? Yes, verily; for this is, as the prophet Ezekiel saith, a sewing of pillows under arm-holes, and bolsters under the heads of young and old, to catch souls, and to lay the conscience asleep upon. But when the time shall come that God awakens them, then will such sleepers say with the prophet, Wo be to them that so have done. Wo be unto such ungodly gospellers that give such counsel unto carnal men, making them by evil means to seek to save their lives, whereby they are likely utterly to lose the same both in body and soul for ever. These are the enemies of the cross that St. Paul speaks of, who with sweet preaching and flattering words deceive unstable souls. These do not choose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a little season, esteeming the rebukes of Christ to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, as good Moses did. I dare accuse them all before God, except they repent, as accessaries to the wilful murder of all the godly christian preachers that have of late been put to death within this realm, and also of the souls of such as perish for lack of true preaching.

Ah, now do I perceive that it was not for nought that the prophet so sorely threatened them with eternal damnation, when he cried, Wo be unto those shrinking children who seek succour under the shadow of wicked Pharaoh. (Is. xxx.) Oh, wo is my heart for them, that ever they should so slide from the Lord their instructor, and cause others to do the same. Yea the most merciful Lord himself, in his word bewails them, and as it were mourns for them, saying, Alas for these disobedient, shrinking children, that they will take counsel without me; alas, that they will take a secret advice, and not out of my Spirit, and therefore heap they sin upon sin, &c. Now tell me, O you vain and carnal gospellers, that are not only content to play the disobedient, shrinking children yourselves, but also as much as in you lieth, allure all others to do the like, to the great dishonour of God and destruction of your brethren's souls; tell me, I say, where you have that counsel and wicked advice? Verily out of the spirit of error and lies; for out of the Lord's Spirit of truth you have it not, for the Spirit of God is always consonant and agreeable to his word. Yea in his word he commands the true servants of God to set themselves at liberty, and not any longer to bear the strange yoke with the unbelievers.

If he shall be sore punished that hideth his talent in the ground, and doeth none other man good therewith, how much more shall he be punished that occupies his talent to evil uses, and employs the same to the destruction of his weak brethren, for whom Christ died. If it were better for one to have a millstone hanged about his neck and to be cast into the midst of the sea, than to offend one of Christ's little ones; yea though it were but by example; what then shall become of those who lead them forth of the way, to commit most strong and detestable idolatry? If evil may not be done, although good should come thereof, then that evil may not be done, whereof comes nothing but innumerable evils both to body and soul, yea so many as a great volume were not able to contain them, if they should be rightly described. I could make a great many strong arguments forth of the scriptures, to prove the doings of these dissemblers both with God and man to be detestable, but these are sufficient to warn such as have not their hearts hardened; but as for the rest, I will say with St. John, He that is filthy let him be filthy still, and upon their own heads be the peril of their perishing.

And now again to you my dear hearts, who by such have been deceived, or are by fear or fragility fallen—to you I speak, and of love I warn you, my dear and faithful friends of London, whom I love in the Lord, as I am no less bound. I would be full loth to be a witness against any of you at the great day. I have found great kindness of you, God recompense you, and therefore duty binds me, and love compels me to call and cry unto you to come away from that filthy harlot of Babylon, and buy no more of her wicked wares. Meddle not with her merchandize at this market time of Easter,* for verily her sin is already ascended up into heaven, and has also procured God's plagues and vengeance shortly to be poured upon her; whereof you shall surely be partakers, if you do not in time repent your backsliding and shrinking from the Lord. Repent, I say, repent, for the tender mercy of God, and have compassion upon your own souls before it be too late. Truly, dear friends, it is now no time to flatter with you, neither can I laugh at your harm, which I see to be at hand, though it be hid from your eyes, as it was from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, when Christ wept full bitterly at

* The Romish ceremonials at Easter are numerous and attractive.

their merry singing, &c. It is not the part of a true heart to laugh with his friend when present peril is at hand, but rather to lament to see him so merry, when he has more cause to mourn. In which respect, I am even constrained with weeping tears, to call unto you my dear friends of London in general, because I will name no person, that you may take heed and know the time also of God's first visitation, for sure I am that his second is hard at hand. Do not you think to flee from his presence, for his heavy hand will find you out, though you should hide yourselves in the very bottom of hell, as the prophet David saith. Think not then that these Romish rocks whereinto you daily creep, can cover you from the fearful face of God, when he shall begin to call you to account for the talent that he has lent you. It is not your feigned excuse of fear and fragility of the flesh, that shall excuse your folly and flying back from him. No, no, you will be even speechless at that day, when every body shall see how you have defiled your marriage garment with superstitions, and how you have joined yourselves to that great harlot, against Christ, who redeemed you neither with corruptible gold nor silver, but with his own most precious heart blood, and cleansed you in the fountain of water through his word, that you might be unto himself a glorious spouse and congregation without spot or wrinkle in his sight. Repent therefore, I say, Repent in time, and take the earnest warning that God sends you by me his poor messenger, willing you to turn to him before it be too late.

But peradventure you will say as the guests did that were first bidden to the feast, you cannot so easily forego your farms, your cattle, goods and lands, your wives and children, &c. O, my dear friends, lay away these vain, yea, wicked excuses, for verily God will in no wise accept them. Consider for Christ's sake your duty towards God in these dangerous days, wherein the Lord is willing to try the chaff from the good corn, and to purge his floor with his fan, that is his cross, that he may bring his wheat into his barn, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. You are called unto a kingdom that must be won with suffering on every side. Into the which you must also enter, as St. Paul saith, through many tribulations, temptations, and afflictions, in the which you must travel as strangers and pilgrims in this wretched world, which is not our native country, nor the place where we must rest

for ever. O then learn to leave all things willingly that you here possess, and lift up your minds always to the heavenly habitation, where you shall continually remain in joys unspeakable. Repose not your felicity in the pelf of this world, which shortly shall perish and come to nought; but set your heart's joy upon the living God, who in Christ, and for his sake, hath given himself wholly to be your portion and inheritance for ever, and therefore of right ought you with gladness to give yourselves wholly unto him, both in body and soul. But that you do not, so long as you seek to serve two masters, which yet you cannot do, as Christ affirms, though you cloke, colour, and counterfeit ever so much. Do you think it but a small thing for the Lord God himself, even the mighty Jehovah, to give himself wholly to be your own good God and most dear loving Father? Do you think it but a light matter that he has given for you, even to the death of the cross, his own only dear Son Jesus Christ, in whom was and is all his whole pleasure and delight, yea, and when you were his very enemies; by which gift he hath given you all things both in heaven and in earth? Do you esteem it but a trifle, that he has given you the Holy Ghost, by whose power and mighty operations you are made the very sons of God, and coheirs annexed with Christ of all your Father's goods and possessions?

But peradventure you will ask me, Who does not seriously regard all these aforesaid most precious gifts? Verily, I say, that none of you all regard them, who do not wholly give over yourselves again to serve him, yea, and that in such holiness and righteousness as is accepted before him. For if you duly considered the depth of his abundant bottomless love and mercy in Jesus Christ, you would so love him again, that you would boldly burst out and say with St. Paul, Who is he, or what is it, that shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord? (Rom. viii.) Read the whole chapter, and Hebrews xi. xii. for your comfort.

But I know that some of you will say, Do none love God and serve him truly, but such as lie in prison or give their lives for his sake? Then, God help us, for very few shall be saved. Indeed, dear friends, even so our Saviour Christ doth say, Many are called, but few are chosen; and strait is the gate that leadeth to life and few find it. And in another place, Christ calls his own church a little flock.

And as concerning the first part of your question, Christ also makes you a plain and direct answer, saying, that whosoever will be his disciple, must needs take up his cross and follow him. And again, He that loveth father, mother, wife, or children, goods or lands, or yet his own life more than me, saith he, is not worthy of me. And St. Paul affirms to you plainly, that all, without exception, who will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. And in another place he saith, To you it is given, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. Now tell me, I pray you, whether these texts of scripture do not prove that all such as will not gladly suffer with Christ, do neither love him, nor serve him, nor yet are of his disciples? Say what you will, and think what you please, yet shall you find this full true, that all such as will not suffer with Christ here, shall not reign with him elsewhere, neither is it meet that they should.

But now, methinks, I hear some of you say to me, Why, sir, we do suffer with Christ as it becomes christians, in helping you to bear the cross with our liberal relief. If we had loved our goods more than we do Christ, as you seem to lay to our charge, then would we not have bestowed so much of them upon you and others, as we have done, yea, and endangered ourselves to bring it to you, &c. Indeed, dear friends, in this point I must needs confess that you have done your duty towards us: may the Lord God grant you to do the rest belonging to him as well; for verily this is not all that God at this time requires of you, as all those good men and women can tell that have as largely sowed the fruits of faith amongst us as any of you have done, and yet never came to any of antichrist's service. God will not be answered with a piece of your goods, since you have promised to forsake all for his love. You must not play the part that Ananias and Sapphira his wife did, for the Holy Ghost will not suffer himself to be dissembled withal; therefore be warned by that example. Also God does not think it sufficient that you forsake all your goods and lands, but he looks that you should suffer in your own persons also, for his sake, yea, the very loss of your lives if he so permit. And but reason, since Christ did not only give us the gifts of his grace and all other good things that we here possess, but also his very life, yea, and that when we were his very enemies. He gave us that freely which was his own, and shall we think scorn

to render unto him again that which is his, and but for a time lent us? especially seeing that we shall receive the same in a far more glorious wise? Leave it we shall shortly, will we, nill we; and God only knows in what horror, fear, or trembling. And were we not better then to wish that the same be taken from us by such means as might not only make most to the setting forth of God's glory, and the good of his church, also to our own everlasting joy and comfort, being certified by the same, that we are the true servants, or rather the chosen children of God, whose death is right dear and precious in his sight? Ah why do we not with the apostles, desire to be reputed worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, seeing the same is the greatest dignity and highest promotion that God can bring us unto in this life, yea, and an honour that the highest angel in heaven is not permitted to have? O that the cross which is now come amongst us for the trial of our faith, should seem a strange thing unto us, who profess the name and gospel of Christ, whereas in very deed we should be most familiarly acquainted therewith, as with our inseparable companion in this life! Look upon all the holy patriarchs and prophets before the coming of Christ, look upon all the apostles, martyrs, and confessors, since the coming of Christ, and tell me if any one of them all did not continually carry the cross as long as they lived, and all in a manner in the end died for God's sake; yea, most chiefly of all, look upon Jesus Christ himself, the very dear and only Son of God, and tell me if all his life and death were not full of most painful and bitter crosses? And will you look to be his disciples, and yet think scorn to bear your cross with him? Disdain you to drink of that same cup which your Lord and Master hath done before you? Will you look to enter into the kingdom of God otherwise than all others have done that are gone before you? Show me your privilege, and tell me where you have this prerogative above the rest of your brethren, yea, above the Son of God himself, concerning his humanity.

My dear friends and faithful lovers of London, be not deceived with self-love and your own fleshly imagination, for at one word this is true, even as God in heaven is most true, that if you do not forthwith, and even out of hand, fly from that harlot, Babylon, and all her abominable idolatry and superstition, you shall surely perish with her in the plagues that God shall shortly pour upon her. And,

furthermore, I say, that if you will not here willingly suffer with Christ for the testimony of his everlasting truth, you shall suffer with the world here for your own wickedness, and then shall you not reign with Christ in glory at his gracious coming; unto which I hope now it is not very long. For this is the firm decree and purpose of the immutable God, revealed in his everlasting word, that all they which will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and that every one of his elected sons shall be scourged, proved, and tried, as gold in the furnace or fire. And these words of Christ shall continue for ever, and be most effectually fulfilled, that whosoever shall be ashamed of him, or of his word, amongst this sinful and adulterous generation, of him will the Son of man be ashamed before his Father and his angels; and he that goeth about by such wicked means to save his life, shall surely lose it for evermore.

Therefore, dear hearts, look to yourselves in time, and consider your calling. Lay away all vain excuses, for verily they will not serve for your discharge when He shall come that will reward every man after the works of their bodies; but he will require of you in this point all that he hath commanded you, as he aforehand hath told you, both plainly and often enough. God give you grace to take it as a warning. And if you feel yourselves too weak to confess God's truth before the tyrants, then for your refuge the Lord hath given you leave to fly from place to place, and that is the uttermost that he will permit you to do; which doing yet is a good confession of Christ and his verity before the wicked world. O that you would follow the example of a great number of your godly neighbours, who are graciously escaped from the snares of Satan, and are now where they serve the Lord with a safe conscience, and enjoy the right and free use of his word and sacraments. Follow them for the Lord's sake, and get you hastily out of Sodom, for surely the Lord is utterly minded to destroy it. Linger not as Lot did, if you love your own lives, lest you find not altogether so much mercy at the Lord's hands as he did, for verily you have tempted him too far already, and have too much despised his long-suffering, lenity, and gentleness, which ought to lead you to earnest and hearty repentance. He has mercifully forborne you these five years past and more; if he find no fruit in you shortly, make reckoning to

be pulled up by the roots every one of you. For the axe is already laid at the root of England, as it was by the Romans at the root of the Jews, when John Baptist began his preaching. I pray God that we feel not the sharp stroke of it as they did. Pray, pray, pray, and repent in time: convert to the Lord that he may heal your backslidings before your wounds be incurable.

I could here say much more, but time will not suffer me; I trust this shall be sufficient to all such as have any spark of faith, love, or true fear of God. As for the rest they are at a point with themselves. Whatsoever any man either write or say, they will surely dissemble one way or other to save their swine, yea, though they do but put their names in the pope's books. Well, yet say not another day but that ye were warned, and though it were but by a poor simple man, yet it was by him that wishes well to all your souls, and one that in this point has told you the truth;* and he trusts shortly you shall see him seal the same with his blood through the help of the good prayers of all you that truly repent and mind unfeignedly to turn to the Lord in time. As for the rest, I will pray for them, but let them keep their own prayers to themselves, for I will be no partaker with them, since I know the same is turned unto sin. Thus with most hearty thanks for all your benefits and manifold kindness showed unto me and my poor brethren, beseeching God to recompense the same sevenfold unto all your bosoms, as I doubt not but he will, according to his infallible promises, I do heartily commit you all unto God's most merciful defence, who ever have you all in his blessed keeping. Amen. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen. Your poor, daily, and most bounden orator,

JOHN CARELES,

prisoner of the Lord in the King's Bench, at all times abiding God's most merciful will and pleasure. Pray for me for God's sake, as I will never forget you by God's grace.

* This and similar letters were read in the private assemblies of the protestants during the reign of queen Mary. See p. 112.

The following Confession of Faith was set forth by the principal supporters of the protestant faith, in a declaration published by them May the 8th, **1554.***

First, We confess and believe all the canonical books of the old testament, and all the books of the new testament, to be the very true word of God, and to be written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and are therefore to be heard accordingly, as the judge, in all controversies and matters of religion.

Secondly, We confess and believe, that the catholic church, which is the spouse of Christ, as a most obedient and loving wife, doth embrace and follow the doctrine of these books in all matters of religion, and therefore is she to be heard accordingly; so that those who will not hear this church, thus following and obeying the word of her husband, we account as heretics and schismatics, according to this saying, If he will not hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen.

Thirdly, We believe and confess all the articles of faith and doctrine set forth in the symbol of the apostles, which we commonly call the Creed; and in the symbols of the council of Nice, kept A.D. 324; of Constantinople, A.D. 384; of Ephesus, A.D. 432; of Chalcedon, A.D. 454; of Toletum, the first and fourth. Also in the symbols of Athanasius, Irenæus, Tertullian, and of Damasus, which was about the year of our Lord 376. We confess and believe, we say, the doctrine of the symbols generally and particularly; so that, whosoever doth otherwise, we hold the same to err from the verity.

Fourthly, We believe and confess, concerning justification, that, as it cometh only from God's mercy through Christ, so it is perceived and had of none, who are of years of discretion, otherwise than by faith only, which faith is not an opinion, but a certain persuasion, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the mind and heart of man; wherethrough, as the mind is illumined, so the heart is suppled to submit itself to the will of God unfeignedly; and so showeth

* This confession of faith was subjoined by the chief protestant divines, to a declaration of their reasons why they would not dispute with the papists, unless, "in writing, or before the queen and her council, or the parliament houses." They came to this resolution on account of the unfair manner in which the papists had conducted the disputations at Oxford, see Ridley's letters, p. 175.

forth an inherent righteousness, which is to be discerned in the article of justification, from the righteousness which God endueth us withal in justifying us, although inseparably they go together. And this we do, not for curiosity or contention sake, but for conscience sake, that it may be quiet, which it never can be, if we confound without distinction, forgiveness of sins and Christ's justice* imputed to us, with regeneration and inherent righteousness. By this we disallow the papistical doctrines of free-will, of works of supererogation, of merits, of the necessity of auricular confession and satisfaction to Godward.

Fifthly, We confess and believe concerning the exterior service of God, that it ought to be according to the word of God; and therefore in the congregation all things public ought to be done in such a tongue as may be most to edify; not in Latin, where the people understand it not.

Sixthly, We confess and believe, that God only, by Jesus Christ, is to be prayed unto and called upon; and therefore we disallow invocation or prayer to saints departed this life.

Seventhly, We confess and believe, that, as a man departeth this life, so shall he be judged in the last day generally, and in the mean season he is entered, either into the state of the blessed for ever, or of the damned for ever; and therefore is either past all help, or else needeth no help of any in this life. Wherefore we affirm, purgatory, masses, and such suffrages as the popish church doth obtrude as necessary, to be the doctrine of antichrist.

Eighthly, We confess and believe, of the sacraments of Christ, which are baptism and the Lord's supper, that they ought to be ministered according to the institution of Christ, concerning the substantial parts of them: and that they are no longer sacraments, than they are had in use, and used to the end for the which they were instituted. And here we plainly confess, that the mutilation of the Lord's supper, and the subtraction of the one kind from the lay people, is antichristian; and so is the doctrine of transubstantiation of the sacramental bread and wine after the words of consecration, as they are called. Also, the adoration of the sacrament with honour due unto God, the reservation and carrying about of the same. Also, the mass to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead, or a work that pleases God.

* Christ's righteousness.

All these we confess and believe to be antichrist's doctrine; as is inhibition of marriage, as unlawful to any state. And we doubt not, by God's grace, but we shall be able to prove all our confessions here, to be most true by the verity of God's word, and consent of the catholic church, which followeth, and hath followed the governance of God's Spirit, and the judgment of his word. And this, through the Lord's help, we will do, either in disputation by word, before the queen's highness and her council, or before the parliament houses, of whom we doubt not to be impartially heard; or else with our pens, whensoever we shall be thereto, by them that have authority, required and commanded.

In the mean season, as obedient subjects, we shall behave ourselves toward all that are in authority; and not cease to pray to God for them, that he would govern them all, generally and particularly, with the spirit of wisdom and grace; and so we heartily desire, and humbly pray all men to do, in no point consenting to any kind of rebellion or sedition against our sovereign lady, the queen's highness; but where they cannot obey, but they must disobey God, there to submit themselves with all patience and humility, to suffer, as the will and pleasure of the higher powers shall adjudge, as we are ready, through the goodness of the Lord, to suffer whatsoever they shall adjudge us unto, rather than we will consent to any doctrine contrary to this which we here confess: unless we shall be justly convinced thereof either by writing or by word, before such judges, as the queen's highness and her council, or the parliament houses, shall appoint. For the universities and clergy have condemned our causes already by the bigger, but not by the better part, without all disputation of the same; and therefore most justly we may and do appeal from them as our judges in this behalf, except it be in writing, that to all men the matter may appear.

The Lord of mercy endue us all with the spirit of his truth, and grace of perseverance therein to the end. Amen.

Signed by Coverdale, Farrar, Taylor, Philpot, Bradford, Hooper, Crome, Rogers, Saunders, Lawrence, J. P. T. M.

THE END.

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